ARUBA TODAY®
Thursday
July 4, 2019
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Family of deadly Vegas shooting victim sues gun makers

By M. L. PRICE, M. BALSAMO and S. SONNER
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The parents of a young woman killed in the 2017 Las Vegas massacre said Wednesday they blame gun manufacturers for their daughter's death.

"Someone murdered our daughter," said James Parsons, whose 31-year-old daughter Carrie Parsons was one of 58 people killed when a gunman rained down gunfire from a high-rise hotel. "Someone should be held accountable for that."

A wrongful death lawsuit filed Tuesday targets Colt and seven other gun manufacturers, along with gun shops in Nevada and Utah, arguing their weapons are designed to be easily modified to fire like automatic weapons.

"It was a horrifying, agonizing experience and we don't want this to happen to other families," Parsons told The Associated Press of the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

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In this Sept. 21, 2018, file photo, the Mandalay Bay hotel and casino reflects the last sunlight of the day along the Las Vegas Strip in Nevada.

Associated Press

Appeals court: Trump can't use Pentagon cash for border wall

By ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — An appeals court on Wednesday upheld a freeze on Pentagon money to build a border wall with Mexico, casting doubt on President Donald Trump's ability to make good on a signature campaign promise before the 2020 election.

A divided three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco agreed with a lower court ruling that prevented the government from tapping Defense Department counterdrug money to build high-priority sections of wall in Arizona and New Mexico.

The decision is a setback for Trump's ambitious plans. He ended a 35-day government shutdown in February after Congress gave him far less than he wanted. He then declared a national emergency that the White House said would free billions of dollars from the Pentagon.

President Donald Trump talks during a signing ceremony in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Monday, July 1, 2019, with Vice President Mike Pence, left, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar.

Associated Press

The case may still be considered, but the administration cannot build during the legal challenge.

A freeze imposed by U.S. District Judge Haywood Gilliam Jr. of Oakland in May prevented work on two Pentagon-funded wall contracts — one spanning 46 miles (74 kilometers) in New Mexico and another covering 5 miles (8 kilometers) in Yuma, Arizona.

While the order applied only to those first-in-line projects, Gilliam made clear that he felt the American Civil Liberties Union and other groups were likely to prevail at trial in their argument that the president was ignoring Congress' wishes by diverting Defense Department money.

"Congress's 'absolute' control over federal expenditures — even when that control may frustrate the desires of the Executive Branch regarding initiatives it views as important — is not a bug in our constitutional system. It is a feature of that system, and an essential one," the judge wrote.

Gilliam went a step further Friday by ruling definitively that the administration couldn't use Pentagon counterdrug money for the two projects covered in his May order or to replace 63 miles (101 kilometers) in the Border Patrol's Tucson, Arizona, sector and 15 miles (24 kilometers) in its El Centro, California, sector.

Trump immediately vowed to appeal.

At stake is billions of dollars that would allow Trump to make progress on a major 2016 campaign promise heading into his race for a second term.

Trump declared a national emergency after losing a fight with the Democratic-led House that led to the 35-day shutdown. Congress agreed to spend nearly $1.4 billion on barriers in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, the busiest corridor for illegal crossings, which was well below the $5.7 billion the president requested.

Trump grudgingly accepted the money but declared the emergency to siphon money from other government accounts, finding up to $8.1 billion for wall construction. The money includes $3.6 billion from military construction funds, $2.5 billion from Defense Department counterdrug activities and $600 million from the Treasury Department's asset forfeiture fund.

Acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper has yet to approve transferring the military construction funds. The Treasury Department funds have so far survived legal challenges.

The president's adversaries say the emergency declaration was an illegal attempt to ignore Congress. The ACLU sued on behalf of the Sierra Club and the Southern Border Communities Coalition.

The administration said the U.S. needed emergency protection to fight drug smuggling. Its arguments did not mention illegal immigration or unprecedented numbers of Central American families seeking asylum at the U.S. border, which have dominated public attention in recent months.

Justice Department attorneys argued that the freeze on Pentagon funds showed a "fundamental misunderstanding of the federal appropriations process."

"The real separation-of-powers concern is the district court's intrusion into the budgeting process," they wrote.❑

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Family of deadly Vegas shooting victim sues gun makers

Continued from Front

The lawsuit is the latest case to challenge a federal law shielding gun manufacturers from liability. It charges that gun makers marketed the ability of the AR-15-style weapons to be easily modified to mimic machine guns and fire continuously, violating both a state and federal ban on automatic weapons. A firearms industry group said Wednesday the man who opened fire on a country music concert is the only one responsible for the deaths.

Parsons and his wife Ann-Marie argue in the lawsuit that the firearms are "thinly disguised" machine guns that the manufacturers knew could be easily modified, even without the use of a "bump stock," an attachment used by the Las Vegas gunman that allowed him to fire in rapid succession.

The Trump administration banned bump stocks this year, making it illegal to possess them under the same federal laws that prohibit machine guns.

"We understand this is an uphill battle," Ann-Marie Parsons told the AP on Wednesday from their home in suburban Seattle. "But somebody has got to do something because the carnage continues."

"Losing our daughter is the worst thing that ever happened to us. It is hurtful to us every time we see these things happen," she said.

The lawsuit charges the manufacturers showed a "reckless lack of regard for public safety" by advertising the firearms "as military weapons and signaling the weapon's ability to be simply modified." It alleges there are dozens of videos online showing people how to install bump stocks.

"It was only a question of when - not if - a gunman would take advantage of the ease of modifying AR-15s to fire automatically in order to substantially increase the body count," the lawsuit states.

Courts have typically rejected lawsuits against gun manufacturers and dealers in other high-profile shooting attacks, citing a 2005 federal law that shields gun makers from liability in most cases when their products are used in crimes.

Neither Colt nor any of the other manufacturers immediately responded to requests for comment from The Associated Press. But a national trade association formed on behalf of the firearms industry in 1961 said in an email to AP on Wednesday there is no legal basis for the lawsuit.

Lawrence G. Keane, senior vice president and general counsel for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, said the responsibility for the tragedy in Las Vegas "rests with the criminal who committed the violent and reprehensible acts."

"It is wrong to blame the manufacturers of legal, non-defective products lawfully sold for the actions of a madman," he wrote. "Doing so would be like attempting to hold Ford responsible for a deranged criminal who affixes aftermarket parts to a Mustang and then misused that car to attack a group of pedestrians."

This Oct. 3, 2017, file photo shows the Mandalay Bay resort and casino, right, overlooking an outdoor festival grounds across the street, left, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

The attorney for the Parsons family, Joshua Koskoff, is representing relatives of victims of the Newtown school massacre in a similar lawsuit. The Connecticut Supreme Court in March ruled that gun-maker Remington could be sued for the way it marketed an AR-15-style rifle used to kill 20 first graders and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. Remington plans to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.❑

In this May 14, 2013, file photo, the Department of Justice headquarters building in Washington is photographed early in the morning.

Associated Press

U.S. still looking for way to ask about citizenship on census

By MARK SHERMAN and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department said Wednesday that it was still looking for a way to include a controversial citizenship question on the 2020 census, even though the government has started the process of printing the questionnaire without it. The abrupt shift from the Justice Department came hours after President Donald Trump insisted he was not dropping his efforts to ask about citizenship in next year's nationwide survey. On Twitter he declared, "We are absolutely moving forward."

The administration has faced numerous roadblocks to adding the citizenship question, including last week's Supreme Court ruling that blocked its inclusion, at least temporarily. The Justice Department had insisted to the Supreme Court that it needed the matter resolved by the end of June because it faced a deadline to begin printing census forms and other materials.

"There may be a legally available path," Assistant Attorney General Joseph Hunt told U.S. District Judge George Hazel during a conference call with parties to one of three census lawsuits. The call was closed to reporters, but a transcript was made available soon after.

A day earlier, a Justice Department spokeswoman confirmed that there would be "no citizenship question on the 2020 census" amid signs that the administration was ending the legal fight. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said in a statement Tuesday that the "Census Bureau has started the process of printing the decennial questionnaires without the question."

Trump's tweet sowed enough confusion to prompt Hazel and U.S. District Judge Jesse Furman, overseeing a census lawsuit in New York, to demand clarification by the end of the day.

"I don't know how many federal judges have Twitter accounts, but I happen to be one of them, and I follow the President, and so I saw a tweet that directly contradicted the position" that a Justice Department lawyer took in a hearing Tuesday, Hazel said.

Fear and confusion among immigrants might just be the president's aim, a lawyer for opponents of the question said, since the Census Bureau's own experts have said asking about citizenship would depress participation by immigrants and people who are in the country illegally.

"The President's tweet has some of the same effects that the addition of the question would in the first place and some of the same effects on the 18-month battle that was just waged over the citizenship question. It leaves the immigrant communities to believe that the Government is still after information that could endanger them," Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund lawyer Denise Hulett said.

Joshua Gardner, a second Justice Department lawyer on the conference call, confirmed that "the Census Bureau is continuing with the process of printing the questionnaire without a citizenship question, and that process has not stopped."

Gardner, a 16-year Justice Department lawyer, said he was as surprised by Trump's tweet as anyone. "The tweet this morning was the first I had heard of the President's position on this issue, just like the plaintiffs and Your Honor. I do not have a deeper understanding of what that means at this juncture other than what the President has tweeted," he said.❑

California becomes 1st state to ban hairstyle discrimination

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE
Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Gov. Gavin Newsom signed into law Wednesday a bill making California the first state to ban workplace and school discrimination against black people for wearing hairstyles such as braids, twists and locks.

The law by Democratic Sen. Holly Mitchell of Los Angeles, a black woman who wears her hair in locks, makes California the first state to explicitly say that those hairstyles are associated with race and therefore protected against discrimination in the workplace and in schools.

"We are changing the course of history, hopefully, across this country by acknowledging that what has been defined as professional hair styles and attire in the work place has historically been based on a Euro-centric model — based on straight hair," Mitchell said.

Stephanie Hunter-Ray, who works at a makeup counter, says she typically wears her hair braided or in an afro, but one day she showed up to work with it straightened and styled in a bob. Her manager told Hunter-Ray her hair had never looked so normal.

"It bothered me," Hunter-Ray said in an interview at the hair salon she owns in Sacramento that specializes in natural hair styles. "What do you mean by 'normal?' Your normal is not my normal. My normal is my 'fro or my braids."

Alikah Hatchett-Fall, who runs Sacred Crowns Salon in Sacramento, said she's had black men come into her salon asking to have their hair cut off because they can't find jobs.

California's new law, which takes effect Jan. 1, is significant because federal courts have historically held that hair is a characteristic that can be changed, meaning there's no basis for discrimination complaints based on hairstyle. The U.S. Supreme Court recently declined to hear the case of an Alabama woman who said she didn't get a job because she refused to change her hair.

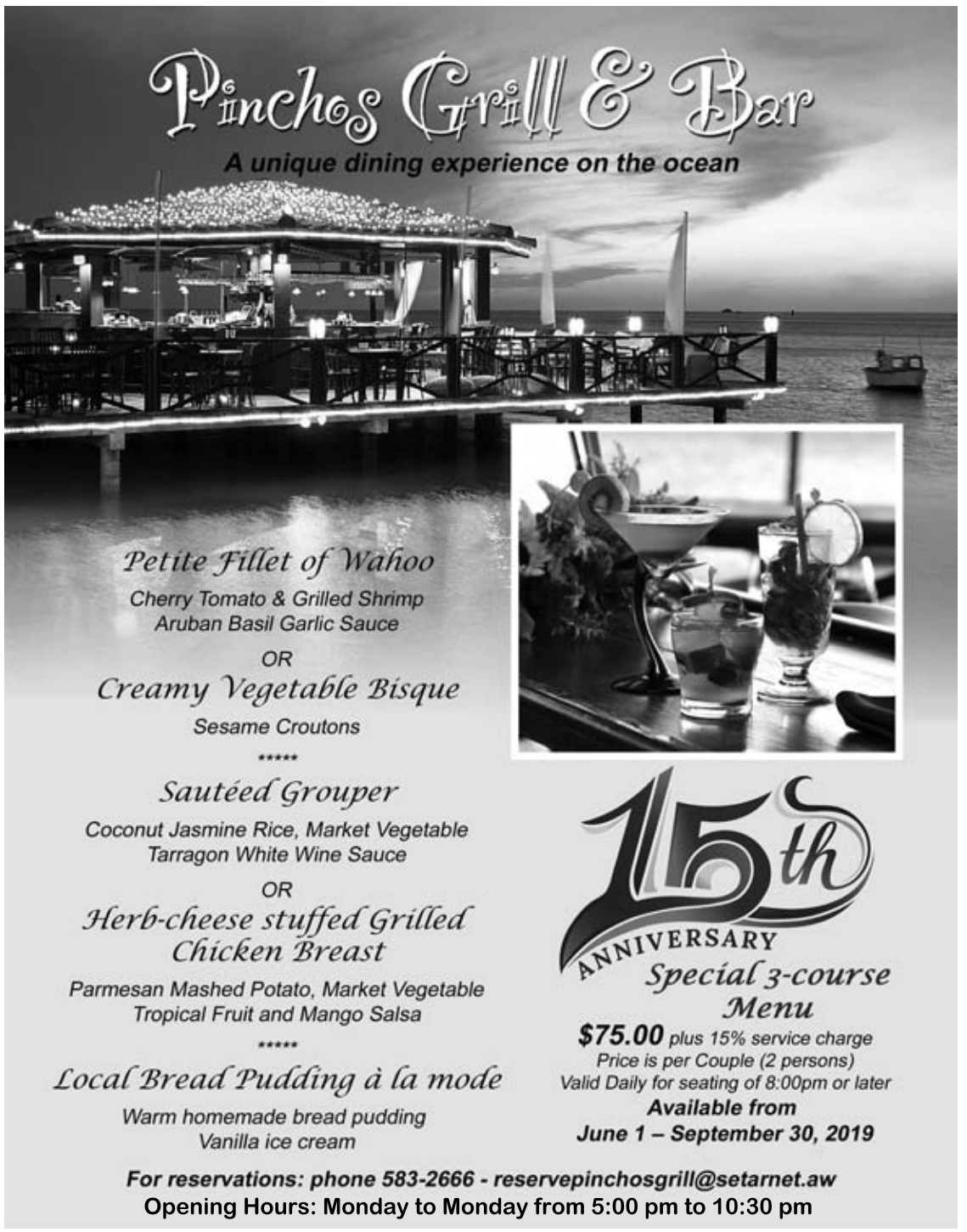
California Gov. Gavin Newsom, middle, signs State Bill, SB-188 Discrimination: hairstyles by state Sen. Holly Mitchell of Los Angeles, third from left, that bans workplace and school discrimination against black people for wearing natural hairstyles, including locks and braids.

Associated Press

The issue burst into public view last December, when a black high school wrestler in New Jersey was told by a referee that he had to cut off his dreadlocks if he wanted to compete. California's Democratic governor said the video was a clear example of the discrimination black Americans face. "His decision whether or not to lose an athletic competition or lose his identity came into, I think, stark terms for millions of Americans," Newsom said before signing the bill alongside Mitchell and half a dozen advocates. "That is played out in workplaces, it's played out in schools — not just athletic competitions and settings — every single day all across America in ways subtle and overt." Though California is the first state with such a law, New York City earlier this year issued legal guidance banning discrimination against someone based on their hairstyle. The beauty company Dove is part of a coalition pushing for more hairstyle protections, and Mitchell said she hopes other states follow California. Mitchell's bill adds language to the state's discrimination laws to say that "race" also includes "traits historically associated with race," including hair texture and protective hairstyles. It further defines protective hairstyles as braids, twists and locks. The term locks, or "locs," is the preferred term to dreadlocks, which has a derogatory connotation.

At Hunter-Ray's studio, Exquisite U, on Wednesday, her stylists and customers reflected on the new law.

Shereen Africa, who was having her hair re-braided by Elicia Drayton, said she used to work at a television station in Mississippi where a black anchor quit after facing resistance to wearing her hair in locks. Africa said she did not wear her hair in braids at the job, even though she wasn't on air, because the environment wasn't supportive of it.❑



Florida woman who took husband's guns faces misdemeanor

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — A Florida woman who took her estranged husband's guns after his arrest and turned them over to the police will be charged with misdemeanor trespassing instead of theft and burglary, a prosecutor said Wednesday.

Courtney Irby originally had faced the more serious charges after her arrest last month in a case that critics said unfairly pitted the safety of domestic violence victims against guns rights.

But State Attorney Brian Haas said at a news conference in Bartow that the case was more about a messy divorce than either of those issues and the marital discord was leading to charges against both spouses.

The prosecutor said he was filing an aggravated battery charge against Joseph Irby for hitting his wife's vehicle with his car at low speed a day before her arrest. "This is case of a highly contested divorce, escalating to the point of husband and wife being charged with crimes," Haas said.

This file combination of booking photos provided by the Polk County Sheriff's Office shows Courtney Irby on June 15, 2019, and her husband, Joseph Irby, on June 14.

Associated Press

Democratic state Rep. Anna Eskamani, who had called Courtney Irby's arrest last month "ridiculous," said Wednesday that she was grateful the state attorney wasn't proceeding with the original charges.

"As we have made clear many times before, we must support and empower our domestic violence survivors, not incarcerate them," Eskamani said in a statement. "We want domestic violence survivors to trust law enforcement, and to feel comfortable reporting a crime." Lawrence Shearer, an attorney for Courtney Irby, didn't return messages seeking comment. Parts of Courtney Irby's initial story were misleading when she said she took her husband's guns and turned them over to the police because she feared for her life, according to the prosecutor.

The Irbys had gotten into an argument at their child's day camp last month, and Joseph Irby followed his wife's car, tapping it three times at low speed, Haas said. After her husband's arrest, Courtney Irby obtained a temporary injunction for protection against her husband, saying she was in fear of her husband because of his texting and made no mention of his guns, the prosecutor said.

Deciding she and her children needed to leave the area, Courtney Irby went with a friend to Joseph Irby's home to retrieve a luggage key. Because of frustration that her husband had "cleaned out" their bank account, Courtney Irby took two watches and a GoPro camera with the intent to sell them, as well as items belonging to her children. She also took the two guns, Haas said.

"Taking the guns was merely an afterthought," the prosecutor said.

When Courtney Irby returned to her home to finish packing, another friend found out about the guns and told Courtney Irby she should turn them over to the police, which she did, Haas said.

Courtney Irby was arrested at the police station and spent almost six days in the jail in Bartow, located midway between Tampa and Orlando.

While Courtney Irby's entry into her estranged husband's home is something that can't be ignored, the dispute over the property she took is "a matter best handled by a divorce judge," Haas said.

Divorce "brings out the absolute worse in people," the prosecutor said. "If my office gets into the business of husbands and wives disputing over property, I'm going to have to hire 10 more lawyers."❑

Judge to reassess $80 million award in Monsanto cancer case

In this Feb. 24, 2019, file photo, containers of Roundup are displayed on a store shelf in San Francisco.

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A U.S. judge will reconsider a jury's $80 million damage award to a California cancer victim who used Monsanto's Roundup weedkiller.

U.S. District Judge Vince Chhabria said at a hearing Tuesday that he will reduce but not entirely eliminate punitive damages for what he called the company's "reprehensible" conduct, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

The judge said evidence at the trial showed "Monsanto not really caring whether its products cause cancer," after questions arose within the company about the product's safety and a World Health Organization agency classified glyphosate as a probable human carcinogen in 2015.

Monsanto attorney Brian Stekloff replied that the company's actions were "consistent with the regulatory and scientific consensus."

In March, a jury found that glyphosate was a likely cause of 70-year-old Edwin Hardeman's diagnosis of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Hardeman was diagnosed with the cancer in 2015 after spraying the product on his Sonoma County property for more than 26 years. Jurors awarded him $200,000 for economic losses, $3 million for past pain and suffering, another $2 million for emotional distress in his future years, and $75 million in punitive damages.

Hardeman's cancer is now in remission.

Chhabria showed no signs of granting Monsanto's request to overturn the verdict, but he planned to reduce the $75 million punitive damage award to comply with the Supreme Court's constitutional standards, which specify that awards more than four times the amount of awarded compensation require special justification, and cannot exceed nine times the compensation except in extraordinary cases.

Hardeman's lawyer, Aimee Wagstaff, argued that Monsanto's conduct proved that the case was extraordinary, and the high damage award was necessary to send a message to the company, which is valued at $7.8 billion.

Wagstaff also pushed back against the judge's questioning of the $2 million award for Hardeman's remaining years, saying, "The fears come back with every test."

Thousands of similar lawsuits against Monsanto are pending in state and federal courts.

Monsanto is appealing verdicts in the few cases that have been decided.❑

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Fire destroys Jim Beam warehouse, bourbon flows into river

By BRUCE SCHREINER
Associated Press

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — A fire destroyed a massive Jim Beam warehouse filled with about 45,000 barrels of aging bourbon in Kentucky, and state officials worried that runoff whiskey seeping into nearby waterways would kill fish.

Firefighters from four counties responded to the blaze that erupted late Tuesday. It sent flames shooting into the night sky and generated so much heat that firetruck lights melted.

Lightning might have been a factor, but fire investigators haven't been able to start looking for the cause, Woodford County Emergency Management Director Drew Chandler said.

The warehouse was a total loss. Looking to reassure consumers of Jim Beam bourbon, Beam Suntory indicated it amounted to a drop of the iconic brand's total aging inventory.

No injuries were reported, Chandler said. The fire was contained but was allowed to burn until midday Wednesday, he said.

"The longer it burns, the more of the distilled spirits burn with it," he said in a phone interview. "So when they go to put it out, there will be less contaminated runoff that goes into a drinking-water tributary."

By Wednesday afternoon, firefighters were dousing the warehouse's charred remains with water to try to extinguish the fire, Chandler said. As they kept working, the focus turned to the environmental impact of the leaking bourbon.

Bourbon mixes with water in the Kentucky River, Wednesday, July 3, 2019, following an overnight fire at a Jim Beam distillery in Woodford County, Ky.

Associated Press

The distiller hired an emergency cleanup crew and state environmental officials were coordinating efforts to control bourbon runoff into a nearby creek that flows into the Kentucky River, said John Mura, a spokesman for the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.

"We do know there has been runoff enter the creek," Mura said. "And it has made its way into the Kentucky River."

The runoff could have a "serious impact on aquatic life," he said. Runoff is expected to create "low dissolved oxygen levels," which could result in substantial fish kills, the agency said in a release.

State officials warned recreational users on the Kentucky River that runoff will result in water discoloration, foaming and an odor.

Beam Suntory officials said they are working with authorities to assess environmental effects.

The distilling company said the multi-story warehouse that burned contained "relatively young whiskey," meaning it had not reached maturity for bottling for consumers. Bourbon acquires its color and flavor while aging for years in charred new oak barrels."Given the age of the lost whiskey, this fire will not impact the availability of Jim Beam for consumers," the spirits company said in a statement.

The destroyed whiskey amounted to about 1% of Beam's bourbon inventory, it said.

One standard bourbon barrel usually holds about 53 gallons of bourbon that eventually turns into around 150 to 200 750 milliliter bottles, the Courier Journal reported. If all the barrels held bourbon, that would be a loss of at least 6 million bottles, the Louisville newspaper reported.

The distiller said it was grateful to the "courageous firefighters" who brought the blaze under control and kept it from spreading. A second warehouse sustained minor exterior damage but its contents remained intact, the company said.

Jim Beam is the world's best-selling bourbon brand. The classic American whiskey brand is owned by Suntory Holdings Ltd., a Japanese beverage company.

Authorities were alerted about the fire shortly after 11:35 p.m. EDT Tuesday, Chandler said. The orange glow from the inferno could be seen miles away, he said.

Firefighters who withstood the intense heat were able to keep the flames from spreading to some other nearby storage warehouses, he said.

"It melted lights off some of the firetrucks, it got so hot," Chandler said.

The destroyed warehouse, near the Woodford-Franklin county line, was about 100 yards (91 meters) from Glenns Creek, a tributary of the Kentucky River, he said. Existing containment berms were reinforced with sand to try to prevent runoff into the creek, he said.

Beam Suntory officials said the distiller has a "comprehensive" warehouse safety program that includes regular inspections and "rigorous protocols" to promote safety. The distiller said it operates 126 barrel warehouses in Kentucky that hold about 3.3 million barrels for its brands.

The Beam fire was the latest warehouse loss suffered by a Kentucky distiller.

Last month, a storm caused the partial collapse of a warehouse at O.Z. Tyler Distillery in Owensboro. The painstaking process of recovering barrels is continuing as part of the distiller's overall plan that included taking down the entire structure.

Another Kentucky bourbon barrel warehouse collapsed last year. Half of a warehouse collapsed at the Barton 1792 Distillery in Bardstown in June 2018, and the other half came down two weeks later.❑

Deals made at secretive EU summit deliver top job nominees

By RAF CASERT
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — In the end, the European Union's top jobs jamboree had a familiar old-time ring to it.

Instead of embracing a transparent future, leaders of the 28 EU nations repeated the past as they retreated behind closed doors to divvy up a half-dozen jobs for politicians who will be the public faces of the world's biggest trade bloc.

The process was completed on Wednesday, when little-known Italian socialist David Sassoli was picked as president of the European Parliament. Two of the three biggest groups in the EU legislature did not field candidates as part of the political compromise sealed by leaders at their secretive three-day summit.

Sassoli's election left a picture of presidents and prime ministers making backdoor deals, of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron throwing their weight around but also of smaller nations ganging up to exert influence. It left European legislators with little more than a cameo appearance.

"We cannot accept that the presidency of this house is being treated as a negotiating chip in old-school backroom Council negotiations," Greens leader Ska Keller said before she lost her bid for the Parliaments presidency to Sassoli, a legislator few had heard off outside of Italy before Wednesday.

Italy's David-Maria Sassoli applauds after being elected President of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France, Wednesday July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

Macron himself acknowledged the deficiencies as the whole selection process ground to a halt Monday after 28 leaders negotiated through the night in small huddles to push their interests.

"When we have too many hidden agendas, we can't do it," Macron said.

It was not supposed to be like that this. Not after the European Parliament elections in May showed a marked increase in voter turnout and a new interest in EU politics. Parties promised closer relations with citizens and a listening ear for their complaints and aspirations.

A key element of the campaign had been that the lead candidates of the political groups also would be core candidates to head the EU's executive Commission, perhaps the most important job needing a new occupant by late fall.

Yet none of the lead candidates had gotten the big job they craved as of Wednesday, snubbed by animosities between leaders and geopolitics.

German Manfred Weber, the lead candidate of the European People's Party, stood empty handed Wednesday even though his Christian Democrat party is the biggest in the EU Parliament. Weber clutched nothing more than a promise that he might become Parliament president in 2½ years.

Dutch politician Frans Timmermans, the lead candidate of the Socialists & Democrats, is set to remain a first vice president in the European Commission instead of advancing to the helm. The candidates for the four top posts are from Germany, France, Belgium and Italy, four of the EU's six original member states. The fifth is held by Spain.

The outcome nevertheless was a victory for the Visigrad 4 countries of Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia, some of whom Timmermans had accused of veering off the democratic path.

For months, the V4 targeted Weber and Timmermans as being too critical of their national governments. The countries developed enough critical mass among the EU leaders to make clear that picking either man would not be worth the hassles it would cause. "An important victory has been achieved, but new debates keep coming up in international politics," Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said.

"At least now, we have the strength to stand up for ourselves," Orban added. ❑

Ethiopian Israeli protests of police violence enter 3rd day

By ARON HELLER
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Scores of activists returned to streets across Israel on Wednesday to protest the killing of an Ethiopian Israeli teen by an off-duty police officer in what the community calls the latest example of police brutality and discrimination in Israeli society.

Protesters mobilized to block a busy thoroughfare in Tel Aviv before being dragged away by police. Hundreds marched amid officers in heavy riot gear, many chanting, "There's no difference from blood to blood. We're all human beings."

In a nod to the resonant Black Lives Matter movement in the U.S., some held signs with the slogan, "I can't breathe."

Police arrest a a man during a protest in Tel Aviv, Israel, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

At least 12 activists were arrested at various demonstration sites for hurling stones and carrying petrol bombs. But Wednesday's rallies appeared calmer than those of the previous night, when outrage over the killing escalated into violent clashes. Demonstrators attacked police and vandalized vehicles in response to what they see as ongoing police brutality.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged calm and convened a ministerial committee to discuss "all issues" affecting Israel's Ethiopian community, which suffers from poverty and neglect and accuses the police of excessive force.

"We will discuss all issues but we will also discuss something that is unacceptable," he said. "We are not prepared to either accept or tolerate the blocking of roads and the use of violence, including firebombs against our forces, the burning of cars or any other property of citizens."

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said more than 110 officers were wounded over the three days of protests, including from stones and bottles hurled at them.

The activists burned tires and set a vehicle on fire, clashing with police and assaulting those who tried to break through their makeshift roadblocks. Overnight, the protesters continued rioting, flipping over a police cruiser. Rosenfeld said more than 130 suspects were arrested on Tuesday.

The demonstrations erupted after the unarmed Solomon Teka, 18, was fatally shot in a Haifa suburb on Sunday and escalated after his funeral on Tuesday.❑

UK recession fears mount amid Brexit and global slowdown

By PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's economy showed alarming signs of a sharp slowdown, possibly even into recession, as uncertainty over Brexit combines with a less benign global backdrop, according to a closely watched survey of business activity in the U.K. released Wednesday.

The survey, from financial information firm IHS Markit and the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply, showed that the economy contracted in June at its steepest rate since the immediate aftermath of the country's vote three years ago to leave the European Union.

The survey also found the second-steepest fall in output since the height of the global financial crisis a decade ago.

The survey's main "all-sector" purchasing managers' index fell in June to 49.2 from 50.7 the previous month, suggesting that a contraction is underway. Though some of the retreat was clearly due to firms adjusting their stock levels after boosting them to record levels ahead of the original Brexit date of March 29, the survey does clearly highlight the scale of the pessimism among firms.

"The overall degree of business sentiment about the year ahead remains worryingly subdued, characterized by uncertainty over the potential disruption of Brexit, signs of weakening sales growth and a lowering of economic growth projections," said Chris Williamson, chief business economist for IHS Markit.

Like all economies around the world, Britain has had to confront the slowdown in the global economy largely due to mounting trade tensions between the United States and China. However, it has to do that at a time when no one has an idea how Brexit will pan out in the weeks and months ahead.

In this May 2, 2019, file photo Mark Carney the Governor of the Bank of England speaks during an Inflation Report Press Conference at the Bank of England in the City of London.
Associated Press

Brexit has been delayed to Oct. 31 after the British Parliament's failure to back the deal that Prime Minister Theresa May agreed with the EU. Jeremy Hunt and Boris Johnson, who are fighting it out to replace May as leader of the Conservative Party and to become the next prime minister, have indicated that they'd be prepared to back a "no-deal" Brexit on that date if no revised agreement with the EU is struck.

Most economists think such an outcome will lead to a deep recession in Britain as tariffs and other restrictions to trade are imposed. With so much uncertainty around, businesses remain reluctant to invest in the future and many are warning they may up sticks and move to the continent where they will have continued frictionless access to the European single market. Bank of England Governor Mark Carney signaled in a speech on Tuesday that the British economy is slowing by more than predicted. He said it looks like "the negative spillovers to the U.K. from a weaker world economy are increasing and the drag from Brexit uncertainties on underlying growth here could be intensifying."

That was before Wednesday's report from IHS Markit and CIPS, which also listed a catalog of woes afflicting the British economy from the sharpest drop in factory output since Oct. 2012 and the steepest decline in construction since April 2009.❑

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Airstrike kills 44 migrants in Libyan detention center

By RAMI MUSA
SAMY MAGDY
Associated Press

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) — An airstrike hit a detention center for migrants near the Libyan capital of Tripoli early Wednesday, killing at least 44 people and wounding dozens of others in an attack that the U.N. human rights chief said could amount to a war crime. The Tripoli-based government blamed the attack on forces associated with Gen. Khalifa Hifter, whose Libyan National Army has been waging an offensive against rival militias in the capital of the war-torn North African country since April. The attack refocused attention and raised questions about the European Union's policy of cooperating with the militias that hold migrants in crowded and squalid detention centers to prevent them from crossing the Mediterranean to seek better lives in Europe. Most of them were apprehended by the Libyan coast guard, which is funded and trained by the EU to stem the flow of migrants.

Hifter's forces said they were targeting a nearby military site, not the detention center. There also were suspicions of involvement by foreign countries allied with his forces. Countries assisting Hifter include Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Russia.

The airstrike in Tripoli's Tajoura neighborhood hit a workshop housing weapons and vehicles, as well as the detention center, an adjacent hangar housing about 150 migrants, mostly Sudanese and Moroccans, according to two migrants who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal. Online video purported to be from inside the detention center showed blood and human remains mixed with rubble and the belongings of the victims.

The U.N. gave an initial figure of 44 dead and more than 130 wounded. But the two migrants told the AP that three or four escaped harm and about 20 were wounded. They said the rest were killed, indicating the final death toll could be much higher.

Debris covers the ground and an emergency vehicle after an airstrike at a detention center in Tajoura, east of Tripoli in Libya, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

Prince Alfani, the Libya medical coordinator for Doctors Without Borders, visited the detention center in Tajoura hours before the airstrike and said it had held 126 migrants. Survivors fear for their lives, he said, calling for their immediate evacuation.

Amnesty International said its research indicated a weapons storage warehouse was in the same compound as the detention center.

Charlie Yaxley, a spokesman for the U.N. refugee agency, said the detention center's proximity to the weapons depot "made it a target for the airstrikes."

"Coordinates of this detention center were well-known to both sides of the conflict," Yaxley said. "It was known that there were 600 people living inside. So there can be no excuse for this center having been hit." He said the agency had warned less than two months ago that anyone in the detention center could be caught in the fighting around the capital and an earlier airstrike nearby had wounded two migrants. The UNHCR is sending medical teams to the site, he added.

U.N. human rights chief Michelle Bachelet said the attack "may, depending on the precise circumstances, amount to a war crime."

The airstrike "killed by surprise innocent people whose dire conditions forced them to be in that shelter," said U.N. envoy for Libya Ghassan Salame.

The head of the African Union, Moussa Faki Mahamat, also condemned the airstrike, urging an independent investigation and saying those responsible for the "horrific crime" should be held to account.

The Tripoli-based Government of National Accord, which is backed by the U.N., called for an investigation by the world body.

Libya became a major crossing point for migrants to Europe after the overthrow and death of longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011, when the North African nation was thrown into chaos, armed militias proliferated and central authority collapsed. At least 6,000 migrants from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and other nations are locked in dozens of detention facilities in Libya run by militias accused of torture and other abuses. The detention centers have limited food and other supplies for the migrants, who often end up there after arduous journeys at the mercy of abusive traffickers who hold them for ransom from families back home.

The U.N. refugee agency has said that more than 3,000 migrants are in danger because they are held in detention centers near the front lines.

Gen. Khaled el-Mahjoub, a spokesman for Hifter's LNA forces, denied targeting the detention center, saying it was the militia camp in the Tajoura neighborhood that was the target. He did not deny, however, that the migrant detention center was hit.

"We didn't give orders to target the shelter," he said.

The EU urged Libyan authorities to better protect migrants, with its top diplomat and two top policy commissioners deploring the "shocking and tragic attack" and saying it highlights "the dire and vulnerable situation of migrants caught up in the spiral of violence in the country."

Many more migrants "are at risk and should be transferred to safe places swiftly," the EU said.

Although the attack could increase greater Western pressure on Hifter, Claudia Gazzini, a Libya expert at the International Crisis Group, said it was highly unlikely to change the course the fighting in and around Tripoli.

"For both Hifter-led forces and those loyal to the Tripoli-based government, this is an existential war that sees little room for compromise," she said.

She did not expect any actions other than a "verbal condemnation" of Hifter's forces if it is proven they were behind the airstrike.

Hifter, who receives support from Egypt, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, says he is determined to restore stability to the North African country. His rivals, mainly Islamists, are supported by Turkey and Qatar.

His forces control much of Libya's east and south but suffered a significant blow last week when militias allied with the Tripoli government reclaimed Gharyan, a town about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the capital and a key LNA supply route.

On Monday, the LNA said it had begun an air campaign on rival forces in Tripoli. Fathi Bashagha, interior minister of the Tripoli-based government, alleged that Hifter's foreign allies were behind the airstrike and told the AP that they "went mad" after his forces lost Gharyan. He did not identify any countries or provide any supporting evidence. He also denied weapons were stored at the detention facility complex.

Security analyst Oded Berkowitz said the LNA has "a handful of obsolete aircraft" in poor condition. He said it has received spare parts and decommissioned aircraft from Egypt and possibly Russia.

"Egypt and the UAE have been conducting air operations on behalf of the LNA, but there are no indications that the UAE transferred aircraft to the LNA," he said.

The fighting for Tripoli has threatened to plunge Libya into another bout of violence on the scale of the conflict that ousted Gadhafi.

Hifter's campaign against Islamic militants across Libya since 2014 won him growing support from world leaders concerned that Libya has become a haven for armed groups and a major conduit for migrants. But critics view him as an aspiring autocrat and fear a return to one-man rule.

Prominent Libyan writer Mahmoud Shammam described the situation as "disastrous" and said Libya was headed for more "chaotic and hideous escalation" unless the international community takes strong action to stop the fighting.❑

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Thai authorities urged to investigate attacks on activists

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — Rights groups urged Thai authorities Wednesday to investigate attacks against pro-democracy activists after one was beaten and left unconscious on a sidewalk in the latest case of growing violence.

Amnesty International submitted open letters to Thailand's defense minister and its police commissioner asking them to bring to justice attackers against three vocal pro-democracy activists who have faced physical abuse on multiple occasions since the military seized power in a coup in 2014.

Authorities have so far failed to investigate the violence. The ruling junta has actively cracked down on dissent and political discussions while it enacted new election laws that favored its leader, Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, in elections in March.

Amnesty said the attacks against the activists "appear to fit a pattern of systemic violence timed to coincide with their efforts to draw attention to perceived election irregularities and problems relating to the formation of a new government."

A human rights activist for Amnesty International holds a mask of Thai pro-democracy leader Sirawith Seritiwat during a protest at police headquarter in Bangkok, Thailand, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

The appeal follows an attack last Friday on Sirawith Seritiwat, who opposes the military's role in politics.

He was beaten until he was unconscious on a sidewalk near his home in Bangkok in broad daylight.

Photos of a bloodied Sirawith and security camera footage of the attack that were circulated online have sparked public outrage.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said Tuesday he had instructed police to investigate the attack on Sirawith.

"I am not his enemy," Prayuth said.

Police said they're investigating.

The most recent attack on Sirawith left him with a fractured eye socket and head injuries. He was previously attacked on June 3 by at least five men after he had been working on a campaign to petition members of the junta-appointed Senate not to vote for Prayuth to become prime minister.

Other anti-military activists such as Anurak Jeantawanich and Ekachai Hongkangwan have faced physical abuse on multiple occasions by unknown assailants.

Anurak said he was most recently attacked in May by six-to-eight men, some wearing motorcycle helmets and using metal bars to hit his head, after he announced a plan to protest the election of the pro-army speaker of the lower house of Parliament.

Ekachai faced physical abuse on several occasions in addition to having his parked car set on fire twice this year.

He was also subjected to at least four violent attacks in 2018 as he engaged in peaceful protests about official misconduct, according to Amnesty International.

"Intimidating activists by physical abuse appears to be becoming increasingly aggressive and involving a rising number of victims," Angkhana Neelapaijit of Thailand's National Human Rights Commission said in a Facebook post last Friday after Sirawith was attacked.

"These incidents usually occur during the day in public places but authorities have never been able to apprehend the perpetrators, which leads to continued intimidation against political opponents without consideration for the law."❑

Japan says curbs on exports to SKorea due to broken pledge

By MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Wednesday that Japan cannot give South Korean exports preferential treatment because the country is not abiding by an agreement regarding wartime issues that Japan insists have been resolved.

Abe was objecting to criticism over escalating tensions between the two neighbors amid disputes over Koreans forced to work as laborers during World War II. He was defending a decision announced Monday to impose restrictions on Japan's exports of semiconductor-related materials to South Korea. As of Thursday, exports of some materials used in manufacturing computer parts, including fluorinated polyimides used for displays, must apply for approval for each contract. "We did not intertwine historical issues with trade issues," Abe said. "The issue of former Korean laborers is not about a historical issue but about whether to keep the promise between countries under international law ... and what to do when the promise is broken."

Abe made the comment when asked about diplomacy during a party leaders' debate ahead of Tuesday's start of official campaigning for the July 21 Upper House elections.

Relations between the two main U.S. allies in East Asia have rapidly soured since South Korea's top court in October ordered Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corp. to pay 100 million won ($88,000) each to four plaintiffs forced to work for the company during Japan's 1910-1945 colonization of the Korean Peninsula. South Korea's top court ordered the seizure of local assets of the company after it refused to pay the compensation. Mitsubishi Heavy Industries also has refused an order by South Korea's Supreme Court to financially compensate 10 Koreans for forced labor during Japan's colonial era.

Abe said each country bears a responsibility to carry out export controls for national security reasons. "Within that obligation, if another country fails to keep its promise, we cannot give it preferential treatment like before," he said. Abe and other officials have offered conflicting explanations for the move, citing both a lack of trust and unspecified security concerns.

On Tuesday, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga cited national security concerns and "lack of trust" after exchanges with Seoul for Japan's export control measures on South Korea.❑

Mexico federal police rebel against National Guard

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Hundreds of Mexican federal police were in open revolt Wednesday against plans to absorb them into the newly formed National Guard.

Federal police at a Mexico City command center demanded a meeting with Mexico's security secretary, uniformed police blocked a major capital highway in front of federal police offices and yet another contingent blocked the highway between the capital and a state capital, Pachuca, for hours.

The protests came as the government was officially starting to deploy the National Guard to several states to fight crime and control immigration. They threaten to complicate the formation of a new security force that President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has bet Mexico's future security on.

The National Guard is initially being formed by military police and federal police but is also signing up new recruits. López Obrador has been consistently dismissive of the federal police, characterizing it as a failed security force, and gave military officers the bulk of the responsibility for the National Guard.

Protesting police at the command center in the capital's Iztapalapa borough said that their seniority, rank and benefits are not being recognized within the National Guard, which is ostensibly a civilian security force, but whose hierarchy is heavily military.

Hundreds of Mexican federal police gather at a police command center in the Iztapalapa borough, in Mexico City, Wednesday, July 3, 2019, to protest against plans to force them into the newly formed National Guard.

Associated Press

National Guard Commandant Patricia Rosalinda Trujillo Mariel, one of the few leaders of the new force who came from the federal police, was jostled by the crowd as she came to meet the protesters and asked them to put forward representatives to talk.

"I am federal police, I respect the principles of my institution and I want to have a dialogue," Trujillo shouted over the crowd.

One police representative who stepped forward without identifying himself said the protesters were waiting for the arrival of Alfonso Durazo, Mexico's security secretary, who oversees the federal police and National Guard. Trujillo said a delegation of protesters would be taken to speak with Durazo.

Police officer Alejandra Baez Villanueva said the police need their jobs to support their families.

"We aren't protesting, we're just demanding our rights," she said. "We just want them to respect our seniority, because for (members of) the army and the navy they respect it and for us as federal police they don't."

In front of federal police offices in Mexico City, another contingent of uniformed federal police blocked a major highway, the Periferico, backing up traffic for a time Wednesday.

And more than 100 uniformed police blocked the highway connecting the capital and Pachuca near Ecatapec. Traffic was backed up for miles in both directions. Some bus passengers walked from one side of the blockade to the other looking for transportation to carry them on.

The demonstrations also revealed a vast difference in culture between the federal police and military. When federal police officers are deployed they are typically put up in hotels. When the military is operating outside its bases, soldiers sleep wherever available and receive little compensation to cover their meals.

Last week, the newly appointed head of the National Migration Institute apologized for calling some federal police officers "fifi" or posh when they complained about difficult conditions in the effort to reduce the flow of migration through Mexico toward the United States

Mexico sent 6,000 guard members to the southern border to assist in that effort and it has sent thousands more to its northern border to deter illegal border crossings. López Obrador said Wednesday that no federal police would be fired and that those who qualified for the National Guard would maintain their salary and benefits. He said that joining the new force would be voluntary, but was vague about what would happen to federal police who did not.

Critics say the immigration enforcement mission could distract the force from its primary responsibility of getting a handle on violent crime.

Mexico is experiencing the highest number of murders is at least 20 years, though the rate of the killings has stabilized in recent months.

For years, Mexico has relied on the military to confront organized crime, in some cases even disbanding municipal police forces because they were thoroughly infiltrated.❑

Board sues Puerto Rico governor amid economic crisis

By DÁNICA COTO
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — A federal control board overseeing Puerto Rico's finances sued the U.S. territory's governor Wednesday, saying he refuses to submit required documents and has approved tens of millions of dollars in unbudgeted spending amid a 13-year recession.

The board also accused Gov. Ricardo Rosselló of signing nearly two dozen joint resolutions to appropriate funds for expenditures not approved by board-certified budgets. "Puerto Rico cannot fall back into an era of uncontrolled spending," board chairman Richard Carrión said. "This led us into bankruptcy and resulted in pain and suffering on our island."

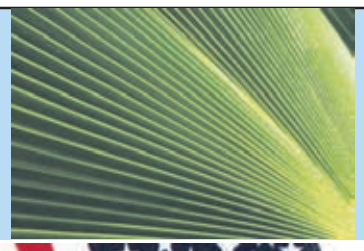
The suit says this "is not the first instance of the governor misinterpreting the scope of his authority" after Congress created the board. Rosselló has long maintained that the board's powers do not supersede his.

A spokeswoman for Rosselló referred questions to Christian Sobrino, the governor's representative on the board. The board also is asking a federal court to bar the local government from enforcing a law that Rosselló approved last month eliminating the obligation of Puerto Rico's 78 municipalities to pay the central government for hundreds of millions of dollars in pension costs related to their own retirees. Board members said this would undermine the central government's ability to pay public pensions if it is in fiscal distress.❑

In this April 24, 2019 file photo, Puerto Rico's Gov. Ricardo Rossello looks out at lawmakers as he delivers his commonwealth address at the seaside Capitol, in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Associated Press

LOCAL



July 4th: Divi-Up & Sparkle-On

PALM BEACH — Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort and Divi Village Golf and Beach Resort got it going for you today, July 4th. The resorts together complete the package of all you need on this number one celebration day that is honoring the Independence of the United States of America. It will be a grandiose ambiance against the backdrop of the white-sanded, gorgeous beach with waving palm trees. Divi takes care of the one-in-a-lifetime experience of your most important holiday with great food, crazy cocktails, amazing live music band, special dinner and more DIVIne ingredients.

Chantal Beke, Food & Beverage Manager of the Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort, says it clear-cut: We have two great restaurants here at the Divi Phoenix that offer something for everyone. Are you into relaxed, informal, chill and casual than Pure Ocean is your thing." The Build-Your-Own-Burger concept and cocktail specials will thrill your day while lounging in the setting of tropical delight, she explains. Add to that the local live band Joyride performing and there is just no chance you will sit still. They will guaranteed make you dance during the show from 4 to 7 PM. Pure Ocean has this picture-me-in-the-tropics feel, away from the resorts strip in its own corner giving the place a very private vibe. You actually feel you are at the only resort on this prime beach.

A Perfect Scene

There's nothing like eating freshly caught fish with the scent of the sea as an accompaniment and restaurant Pure Ocean offers just that. This elegant yet relaxing establishment locates right on the beach. "Here there is no traffic of people walking by, you are in complete peace with your feet in the sand while enjoying culinary delights and pairing wines," says Chantal. Gazing at the most stunning sunset is reality here. A perfect scene for your honoring and celebration of July 4th. Ask the server for the dinner and cocktail special and let paradise surprise you.

Beach Bar Fireworks

"This is what Aruba needed", states one of the clients of the new The Beach Bar located across the street from Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort. The bar is part of Divi Resorts, but accessible to all: guests, non-guests and locals. Today there are fireworks at 8.45 PM and DJ's will shake it up from 4.30 PM to 9.30 PM. Happy Hour lasts all day today as you get 2 and pay 1 and bites of the grill are ready for only $ 10!

On the water's edge, take your seat in paradise. Cocktails, cool sounds and low-slung sofas are the ingredients for this success formula. This is your toes in the sand with a drink in the hand-fav spot to rock your holiday!

Divi Roots

Likewise the US, Divi resorts celebrates its birthday in the month of July. It was in July, 1969 when a New York attorney named Walter Wiggins opened his first resort (known as Divi Aruba) in the former Dutch colony of Aruba, in the southern Caribbean and named it after the indigenous divi-divi tree. The unusual tree common to the island that tends to bend in half due to the occasional high winds of the area has since then been part of the Divi logo. ❑

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www.diviresorts.com

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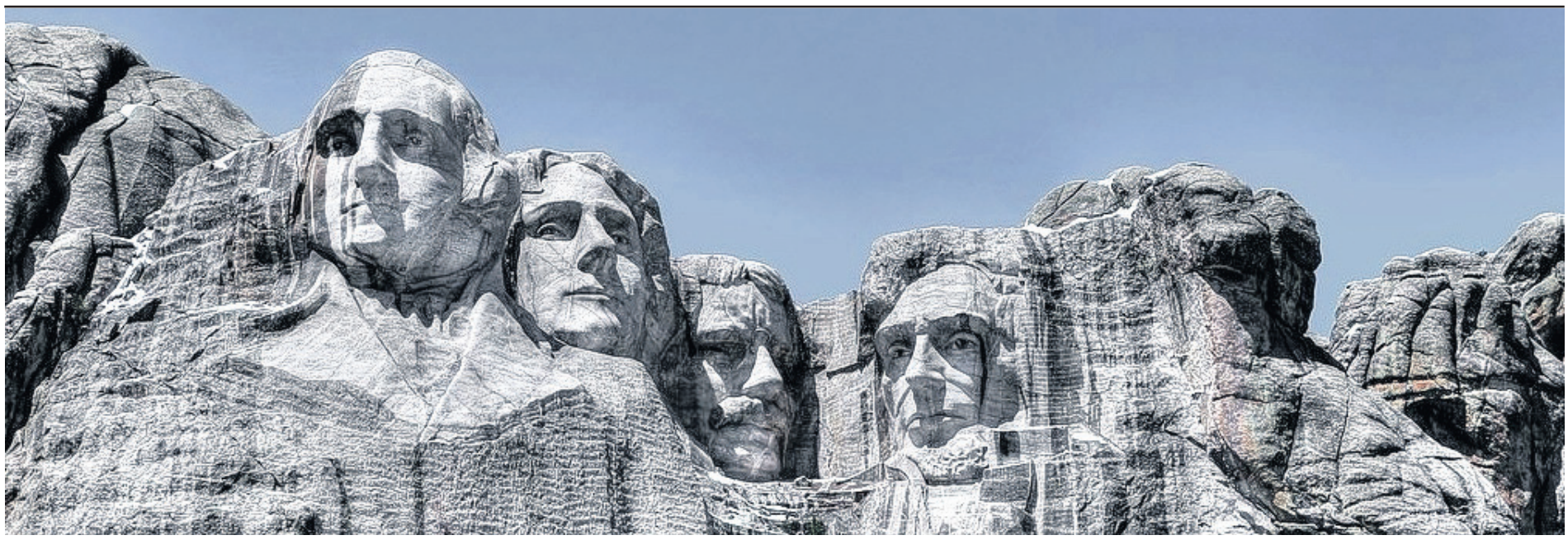

The Day of Independence

ORANJESTAD — Today is a federal holiday in the United States of America, and although this is not the case in Aruba, most of the hotels and resorts do celebrate Independence Day. With most of our visitors being from the U.S., our island joins in on typical American traditions and celebrations. July 4th, Independence Day, is the most important one in the row.

On July 4, 1776, the 13 colonies claimed their independence from England, an event which eventually led to the formation of the United States. Each year on the fourth of July Americans celebrate this historic event.

Conflict between the colonies and England was already a year old when the colonies convened a Continental Congress in Philadelphia in the summer of 1776. In a June 7 session in the Pennsylvania State House (later Independence Hall), Richard Henry Lee of Virginia presented a resolution with the famous words: "Resolved: That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved." Source: military.com.

On the first Independence Day celebration, held in Philadelphia on July 4, 1777, when the country was still in the midst of the Revolutionary War against Britain, citizens came together to watch their new nation's sky illuminated in a grand display meant to raise spirits. For this reason fireworks are part of the celebration as also the typical American lifestyle is honored.

This national birthday party includes many customs like parades and concerts. During the day, families get together for picnics and parades. People dress in red, white, and blue and wave American flags.

On Aruba, most of the resorts prepare celebrations and special dinners for their guests. There are fireworks on the beach, BBQ's, 4th of July cocktails and much more. Check out today's newspaper for great options!

On behalf of Aruba Today we wish everyone a fantastic 4th of July!❑

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Bohemian Restaurant:
Tonight live Violinist Angela

PALM BEACH — Avant-garde from France, nonconformist in style and ethnic in cuisine. That is what the new kid in town is about. Bohemian Restaurant is different, unconventional and a rebel with a cause. The cause is to make you feel king in this hidden garden with outstanding dishes that connect you to the European liaisons of Aruba. TONIGHT has an extra magic: the live Violinist Angela performs! From traditional French and Italian famous melodies to more upbeat pop and rock and roll. A taste for everyone.

A garden full of strong trees and dressed up in New York-style industrial-look elements creates a cosmopolitan vibe while at the same time the tropical breeze and outside dining connect to the Caribbean. Waiters with French

barrettes and pant suspenders service you with a happy and loose style with on the background the sounds of underground chill music varied with French classics.

ONLY French owned Restaurant
The French are famous for their culinary art. Bohemain is the ONLY French owned restaurant on Aruba and offers you Grande gastronomy in a hip decor. French classics like Coq-au-Vin, Beef tartare, Escargot, Duck Foie Gras Terrine, Bouillabaisse Fish Soup, Tuna-Tartare, Quinoa-Salad, Rib-Eye Butter Maître-D, Crème Brulee, Chocolate

Make your reservations through their website: https://bohemianaruba.com.
Call them at 00 297 280 8448.
Facebook: Bohemian.

Lava Cake and Pineapple Carpaccio are on the menu. Mediterranean inspired dishes like Ras el Hanout Fish Kebbab, Honey and Rosemary Lamb Shank, Moroccan Lamb sausages, Mediterranean Sea Bass and Grilled Local Catch are other finger licking options. Directly imported wines from wineries in Europe make up for a perfect pairing. You are welcome to enjoy the Happy Hours and Daily Early Birds from 5 to 7 PM. Bon appetite!

Free Parking available at the parking lot in front of Barcelo Resort. ❑

Aruba Maker Expo

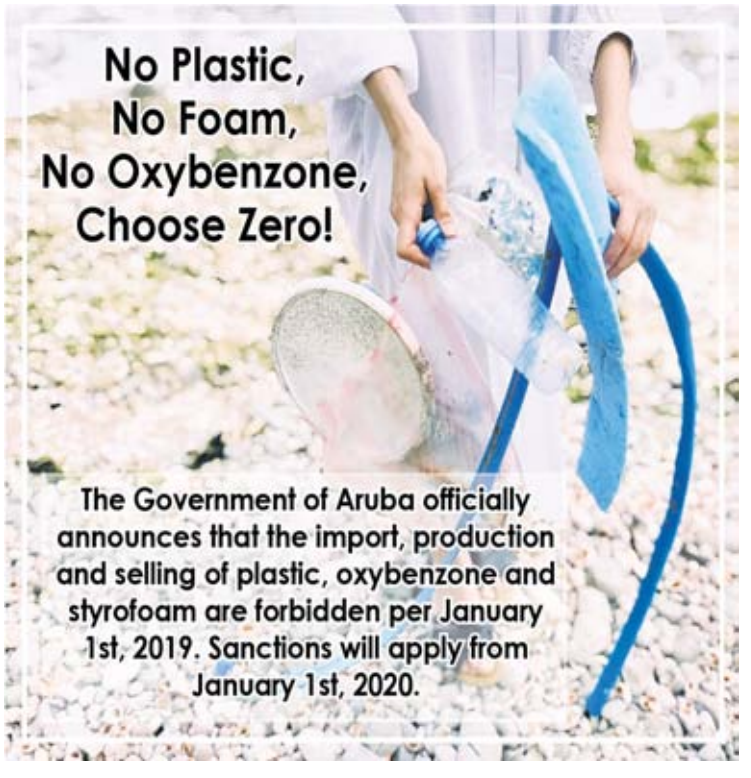
ORANJESTAD — Art, science and technology are the ingredients for a FREE event coming Sunday at the National Library of Aruba. From 11 in the morning until 8 in the evening you are welcome to hop in and enjoy the Aruba Maker Expo.

40 'makers' exhibit their completed projects of art, science and technology that they have been working on for the school year 2018-2019. During the year participants were engaged in expos, workshops and other activities. Maker Expo is a celebration of the culture of innovation and experiments on the island.

The Mo-B Lab which is an innovation bus visited 16 schools and introduced this dynamic world to more than 1000 students with the goal to promote technology and innovation to the young generation.

The expo will show the following works: EPB San Nicolas: aeroponics, Maria College: solar buggy, EPI: several projects on technics, Citizen Science from Metabolic foundation, miniature boats from Stichting Rancho, Aruba Drone Racing, Winston with sinus and cosinus on Scratch, ISA Maker Space & Makerpedia, Chocolate 3D printer from Divi Resort, Frolijk 3D, Milo Croes 3D printing, O4IA CNC furniture, Archeo 3D scans, Scubble bubbles, Design di Flie, Hour of Code, Futura, B||Lab, Atech, Mo-B lab, Robotics Club, Tiny Libraries with Mondiero, Lego with Gerlitza, Foraging with Taki, Electric Vehicles from Andre Loonstra, Plastic Recycling with Plastic Beach Party, Velvet and Irvin Aguilar lo , Jess Wolff. There is also the opportunity to practice yourself with Hour of Code, electrical tests, making products with recycled materials, creating tiny libraries from pallet wood, dance with Artificial Intelligence from Google and much more. Of course drinks and healthy snacks are available.

Metabolic Foundation invites everyone to come and enjoy this wonderful event. More information is to be found at Facebook: Metabolic Foundation or biblioteca nacional aruba.❑



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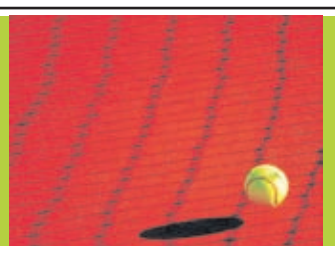
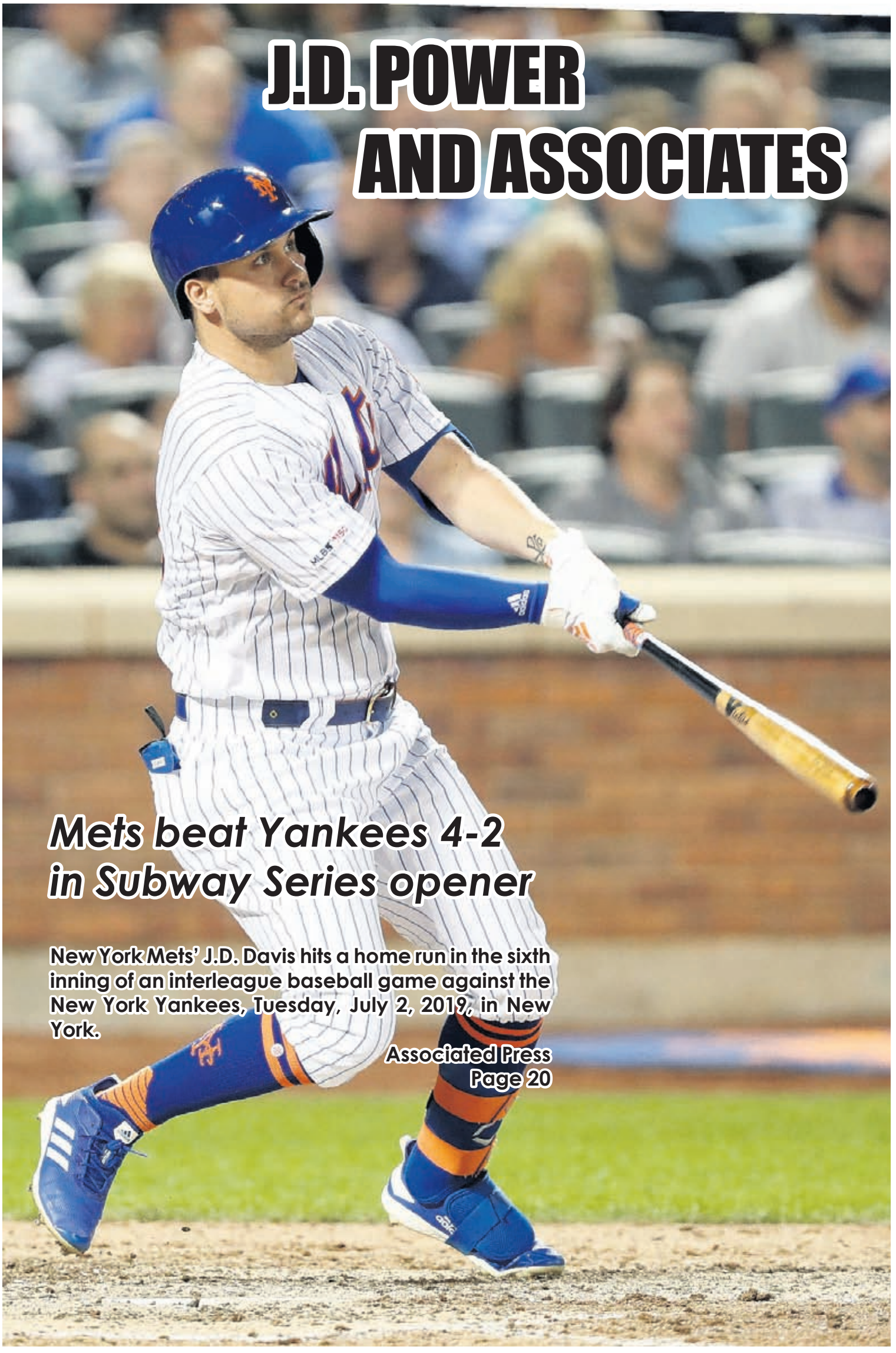


Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime returns to Corentin Moutet of France in a Men's singles match during day three of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.
Associated Press

Just 18, 'FAA' taking flight at Wimbledon; Coco Gauff wins again

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer
WIMBLEDON, England (AP) — Dealing with jitters early in a match is nothing new to Felix Auger-Aliassime.
Being among the favorites to win Wimbledon?
Considering the Canadian is just 18 and never had won so much as one Grand Slam match until this week, well, yes, that's not the sort of thing he is used to.
One more victory, and the kid known to many by his initials, "FAA," could be taking on defending champion Novak Djokovic. Not that he's worrying about that just yet.
The first player born in the 2000s to win a men's match at a major, the 19th-seeded Auger-Aliassime progressed to the third round in his debut at the All England Club with a 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 victory over French qualifier Corentin Moutet on Wednesday.

Continued on Page 18



J.D. POWER AND ASSOCIATES

Mets beat Yankees 4-2 in Subway Series opener

New York Mets' J.D. Davis hits a home run in the sixth inning of an interleague baseball game against the New York Yankees, Tuesday, July 2, 2019, in New York.
Associated Press
Page 20

Wimbledon;

Continued from Page 17

United States' Cori "Coco" Gauff returns to Slovakia's Magdalena Rybaikova in a Women's singles match during day three of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

"I can recall being 10 years old and playing (for) the first time away from home and being very nervous. Since (I was) very young, you kind of learn how to deal with this pressure, with the stress," he said. "But at different stages of your career, you face different times. Now it's Grand Slams. Maybe one day I'll play finals of these events and I'll be, for sure, extremely nervous. I think it's emotions you can't go against. It comes — and then it all depends on how you deal with it. Today, I was able to deal with it in a good way."

Auger-Aliassime is hardly the only one contemplating the possibility that he could play for a major championship in the not-too-distant future. Much like Coco Gauff, the 15-year-old American who beat Venus Williams on Monday and won again Wednesday, Auger-Aliassime is fascinating folks because of his play, but also his age.

Tennis has been waiting for quite some time to discover a worthy successor to the Big Three of Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Djokovic, who have won the past 10 major titles and 53 of the last 64. So there is a bit of irrational exuberance whenever some youngster comes along with the sort of talent and poise Auger-Aliassime seems to possess in abundance.

As of Wednesday evening, British bookmakers were listing Auger-Aliassime at 25-1 odds to lift the Wimbledon trophy, behind only the top three seeds: No. 1 Djokovic, No. 2 Federer and No. 3 Nadal. That's remarkable. The Montreal native only played one Grand Slam match, and lost it, until this tournament. He had never been ranked above 108th until this season.

But who else is there to rate right behind the game's dominant figures? It's just three days into the fortnight and the guys ranked Nos. 4-6 — Dominic Thiem, Alexander Zverev and Stefanos Tsitsipas, guys in their 20s all touted as up-and-comers — already are gone, as is three-time major champion Stan Wawrinka, who lost to 21-year-old Reilly Opelka of the U.S. in five sets.

"I understand that people want to see a new winner of a Grand Slam. They don't want to see three of us dominating the Slam titles. Eventually it's going to come," Djokovic said, then waited a comedic beat before adding with a smile: "in about 25 years."

Djokovic moved into the third round by dismissing Denis Kudla of the United States 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

"There were some moments in the match," Djokovic said, "where maybe I could have done better."

Whatever you say, Novak.

He will face 22-year-old Hubert Hurkacz of Poland on Friday; Auger-Aliassime takes on 21-year-old Ugo Humbert of France.

"I know if I win, I could play Novak. But then there is a match to play. Once the match gets going, you're already in enough trouble in the court," Auger-Aliassime said, "you don't really think of what could happen." He boasts a big serve that reached 131 mph on Wednesday and helped him save 12 of 14 break points. His forehand can end a point when he needs it to. So can his backhand. And his returns were good enough to win the first point in 11 of Moutet's 18 service games.

After losing to him at a grass-court tuneup event last month, Tsitsipas called Auger-Aliassime "the most difficult opponent I've ever faced," agreed with the premise that he could go deep at Wimbledon this year and offered this prediction for down the road: "He can win Grand Slams, to be honest with you."

Auger-Aliassime is trying not to pay too much attention to that kind of talk, saying that he cares more about his own goals and self-belief than any outside views.

When a reporter asked about the idea that he might be looked upon to "carry the sport forward," Auger-Aliassime replied: "'Carry the sport' is a bit much. Obviously, yeah, there's a bit of a pressure. I think it's quite funny, because I think for a lot of players, when they play their first Grand Slam, they have zero expectations. No one talks about them."

With him, that's not the case. Not at all.❑

NFL: Cowboys' Elliott won't be suspended over Vegas incident

NEW YORK (AP) — Ezekiel Elliott won't be suspended over an incident in Las Vegas that police said involved an altercation between the star running back of the Dallas Cowboys and a security guard.

The NFL said Wednesday that Commissioner Roger Goodell determined Elliott didn't violate the league's personal conduct policy. The two-time rushing champion was suspended for six games in 2017 over domestic violence allegations.

In this May 22, 2019 file photo Dallas Cowboys running back Ezekiel Elliott (21) walks off the field after NFL football practice in Frisco, Texas.

Associated Press

Goodell met with Elliott on Tuesday "to reinforce the standards of conduct expected of him and the consequences for failing to meet those standards," the league said. Elliott tweeted a statement after the meeting acknowledging a "poor decision" in Las Vegas and vowing to avoid "compromised situations" in the future.

Elliott was handcuffed but not arrested in an early morning incident at a music festival in May at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Police said Elliott pushed a security guard to the ground. Cellphone video obtained by the celebrity website TMZ showed a member of the event staff stumbling over a parking barrier as Elliott ran into him.

When he was suspended, Elliott was warned to avoid run-ins with law enforcement.

The NFL said it concluded Elliott didn't violate league policy based on interviews with witnesses and others involved in the incident, along with other information.❑

PGA Tour returns to Minnesota as Koepka headlines 3M Open

By DAVE CAMPBELL
AP Sports Writer

BLAINE, Minn. (AP) — The last gathering of the world's greatest golfers in Minnesota led to a truly seminal moment when the U.S. team recaptured the Ryder Cup for the first time in eight years in front of raucous galleries at Hazeltine National.

The big-hitting Brooks Koepka coolly won three of his four matches. Phil Mickelson leaped into the air after a birdie putt on the final hole of his singles match. Patrick Reed followed his clutch shots with fist pumps, arm waves and a hand cupped to his ear to cajole a home crowd hardly needing more encouragement.

"That atmosphere was so cool," Koepka said.

Three years later, the stakes won't be nearly as high, the list of stars is a little shorter and the setting at the TPC Twin Cities will be a bit more subdued. But it is still a nice moment as the inaugural 3M Open this week marks the first regular PGA Tour stop in Minnesota since 1969.

"I have just a lot of fond memories here, and it fit really well into the schedule," Mickelson said after playing in the pro-am Wednesday. "I'm looking to this tournament to get a little bit of momentum heading into the summer stretch."

One of the first prominent players to commit to the 3M Open, Mickelson recalled his first experience in Minnesota as a 20-year-old amateur at the U.S. Open at Hazeltine in 1991.

That course by famed designer Robert Trent Jones on rolling farmland in Chaska, about 25 miles southwest of downtown Minneapolis, also hosted the PGA Championship in 2002 and 2009 and then the Ryder Cup in 2016. Two weekends ago, the Women's PGA Championship was held there.

For a state with one of the shortest golfing seasons in the country, Minnesota has long fostered a passionate community surrounding the sport.

"They're just really nice people," said Mickelson, who is one of seven players ranked in the world's top 30 set to tee off in the first round Thursday.

Brooks Koepka hits off the 18th tee during the third round of the Travelers Championship golf tournament, Saturday, June 22, 2019, in Cromwell, Conn.

Associated Press

Said Koepka: "I can't believe how many people are out on a Wednesday."

They will take on a course designed by Arnold Palmer and built on a former sod farm in Blaine, about 20 miles north of Minneapolis, that's heavy on water hazards and has been considerably lengthened and narrowed from the layout used for the PGA Champions Tour event it hosted from 2001-2018.

Under the renovation direction of Tom Lehman, who with fellow Minnesotan Tim Herron received an exemption to participate this week, the TPC Twin Cities will play as a par-71 at 7,468 yards. The goal was to produce a classic risk-reward setup with tight fairways, thick rough and fast greens.

The 3M Open, which has a seven-year contract with the PGA Tour, will present four par-3 holes and three par-5s.

"We want birdies and train wrecks," said Hollis Cavner, the tournament's executive director, adding: "We feel very comfortable that this golf course is going to play hard and fast. It's going to play long. If we get wind, it's a game-changer."

Koepka, the top-ranked player in the world , has been joined in the 156-man field by Bryson DeChambeau (eighth), Tony Finau (17th), Jason Day (18th), Reed (25th), Mickelson (28th) and Keegan Bradley (29th).

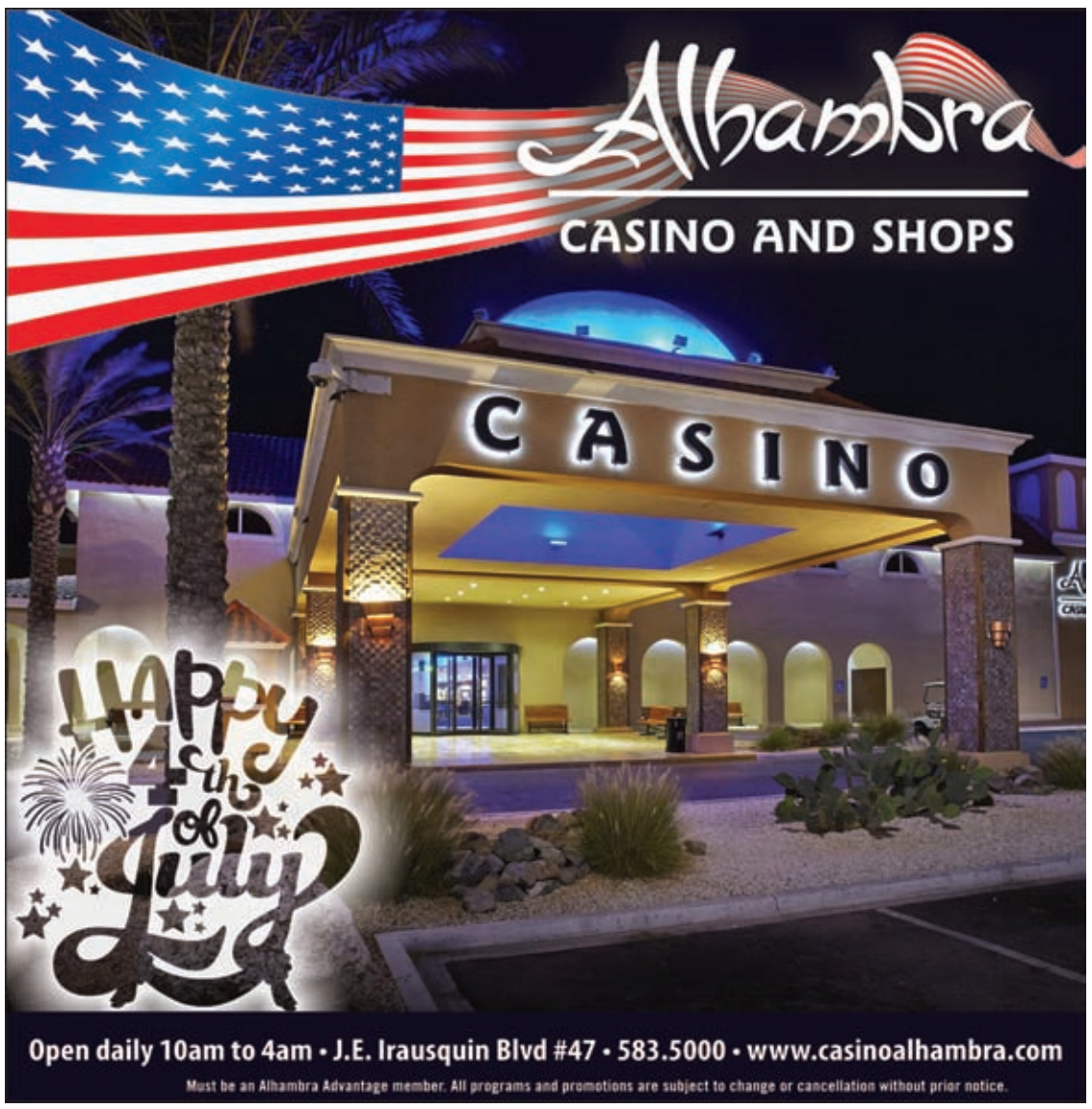
The purse is $6.4 million, with the winner getting $1.152 million and 500 FedEx Cup points .

Koepka entered the week trailing Matt Kuchar by 89 points for first place in the FedEx Cup standings in this newly condensed season that concludes with the Tour Championship and culmination of the FedEx Cup playoffs in late August.

The 3M Open landed in the sweet spot between the U.S. Open and the British Open, an additional attraction for players eager to not only move up in the standings but to tackle a new set of tee boxes and pin placements.

Nate Lashley, who won the inaugural Rocket Mortgage Classic in Detroit last weekend, is among the 3M Open participants.

"It's fun to play different golf courses," Koepka said. "You never know what you come across, what you might like."❑



Mets rally in 8th again, beat Yankees 4-2

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Michael Conforto hit a two-run double that snapped an eighth-inning tie and lifted the Mets over the Yankees in their Subway Series opener at Citi Field.

J.D. Davis homered and delivered a tying double to help the Mets rally in the eighth for the second consecutive game.

The Yankees did not hit a home run for the first time in 32 games, ending their record streak. They had their five-game winning streak stopped and lost for only the second time in their past 15.

Seth Lugo (4-2) worked a hitless eighth and Edwin Díaz got three outs to earn his 18th save in 22 attempts.

Zack Wheeler struck out eight over 6 1/3 solid innings for the Mets, who play their crosstown rivals for the final time this season Wednesday night.

Adam Ottavino (3-3) took the loss, working a 1/3 of an inning and allowing two hits and two earned runs.

New York Mets' on-deck batter Amed Rosario, left, congratulates Robinson Cano (24) as he scores on Michael Conforto's two-run double in the eighth inning of an interleague baseball game, Tuesday, July 2, 2019, in New York.

Associated Press

PHILLIES 2, BRAVES 0

ATLANTA (AP) — Aaron Nola pitched eight innings, Jay Bruce hit a two-run double and Philadelphia spoiled Dallas Keuchel's home debut with Atlanta.

Nola (7-2) allowed four hits, struck out eight and walked three in his second consecutive scoreless outing. He threw a career-high 117 pitches before Héctor Neris finished for his 17th save in 19 chances, striking out the side.

The second-place Phillies, winners of six of eight, trimmed the Braves' NL East lead to 4½ games in front of the seventh sellout at SunTrust Park this season.

Keuchel (1-2) allowed five hits in seven innings in his third start with the Braves.

REDS 5, BREWERS 4, 11 INNINGS

CINCINNATI (AP) — Christian Yelich hit his major league-leading 31st homer for Milwaukee, but Yasiel Puig homered to start Cincinnati's comeback and scored the winning run in the 11th inning, ending the Brewers' streak of six straight wins at Great American Ball Park.

Corbin Burnes (1-4) gave up a two-out single to Puig in the 11th, and Jose Iglesias singled to right. Puig continued home when Yelich's throw to the infield bounced away for an error.

Raisel Iglesias (2-7) retired the side in order in the top of the inning.

Eric Thames and Mike Moustakas also homered for the Brewers. Eugenio Suarez had a two-run homer in the first for the Reds.

NATIONALS 3, MARLINS 2

WASHINGTON (AP) — Patrick Corbin pitched seven strong innings on an emotional night, Trea Turner doubled home the winning run in the ninth as Washington beat Miami.

Yan Gomes reached on an error with one out in the ninth. With two outs, Turner doubled off Jose Quijada (0-2) and Gomes raced home.

A former teammate and close friend of Tyler Skaggs, Corbin wore Skaggs No. 45 rather than his own No. 46. He allowed a run on six hits and struck out seven without a walk.

Sean Doolittle (5-2) pitched one inning for the win in a game that was delayed 76 minutes by rain in the third inning.

Juan Soto hit a two-run homer and a triple for the Nationals, who have won six of seven.

ASTROS 9, ROCKIES 8

DENVER (AP) — Yuli Gurriel homered twice and drove in four runs to lead Houston over Colorado.

Jose Altuve had four hits and Gurriel and George Springer finished with three hits as the Astros won their fourth straight.

Houston rallied from an 8-5 deficit in the seventh. Gurriel's two-run homer off of reliever Jake McGee (0-1) capped a four-run inning that was started by three straight doubles.

Gurriel also homered in the second inning and doubled home a run in the third.

Will Harris (3-1) worked out of a bases-loaded jam in the sixth to get the win and Roberto Osuna pitched the ninth for his 18th save.

PIRATES 5, CUBS 1

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Adam Frazier hit a three-run home run after a long rain delay to lead Pittsburgh past Chicago.

Frazier finished 4 for 4 and scored three runs as the Pirates won for the ninth time in 13 games.

Kyle Hendricks (7-6) ran into early trouble, giving up two runs in three innings with a walk and four strikeouts as Chicago dropped its third straight.

Clay Holmes (1-0) worked two scoreless innings to pick up the win.

Starling Marte had two hits for the Pirates and Josh Bell picked up his major-league leading 78th RBI on a sacrifice fly.

GIANTS 10, PADRES 4

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Evan Longoria had two home runs among his four hits and drove in five runs, and Kevin Pillar also had four hits for San Francisco in a win over San Diego.

Donovan Solano hit first career leadoff homer and Tyler Beede pitched seven impressive innings for the Giants, who won their third straight game. San Diego lost its third straight.

Left-hander Matt Strahm (3-7) gave up all three homers. He allowed seven runs and 11 hits in five innings, struck out six and walked one. ❑

Angels earn emotional 9-4 win in Texas after Skaggs' death

By The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Justin Bour delivered a two-run single on the first pitch he saw after replacing injured American League All-Star Tommy La Stella, and the grieving Los Angeles Angels beat the Texas Rangers 9-4 on Tuesday night.

The emotional win came a day after the death of 27-year-old pitcher Tyler Skaggs, who was found unresponsive in his room at the team's hotel before what was supposed to be the series opener Monday. That game was postponed.

A few hours after watching with his teammates as manager Brad Ausmus struggled to keep his composure in a news conference to discuss Skaggs' shocking death, Jonathan Lucroy had a tying two-run single in the sixth inning and finished with three RBIs.

Kole Calhoun connected for his 18th homer for Los Angeles.

Texas' Delino Deshields circled the bases without the usual fanfare after his second homer of the season. Elvis Andrus stole home for a major league-leading third time.

Los Angeles starter José Suarez honored Skaggs with "RIP 45" written next to what appeared to be a cross on one side of his ballcap. The initials "TSK" were just above the bill on the other side of the Angels logo. He gave up three runs — two earned — with seven strikeouts in four innings.

RAYS 6, ORIOLES 3

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Charlie Morton struck out six straight batters and a season-high 12 overall, and Tampa Bay beat Baltimore for its fourth straight win.

Morton (9-2) pitched seven innings, giving up four hits and a walk.

Brandon Lowe had a homer among his three hits and drove in two for the Rays before leaving the game in the sixth with a leg contusion. Avisail Garcia had a two-run single and Tommy Pham added a two-run double.

Asher Wojciechowski, making his first start for Baltimore, pitched into the sixth inning, giving up four runs and five hits while striking out six.

Chris Davis' sixth home run accounted for the only run off Morton. Chance Sisco hit a two-run homer off reliever Chaz Roe in the ninth for Baltimore's final two runs.

RED SOX 10, BLUE JAYS 6

TORONTO (AP) — David Price pitched six innings to win his fifth straight decision, Rafael Devers homered twice and matched his career-high with six RBI, and Boston snapped a three-game losing streak.

Christian Vázquez had a homer among his three hits and Mookie Betts had two singles, walked twice, and scored three runs for the Red Sox. Devers finished 4 for 5.

Price (6-2) allowed two runs and four hits in six innings. He walked a season-high four. Trent Thornton (2-6) allowed career worsts of seven runs and 11 hits in 2 2/3 innings.

INDIANS 9, ROYALS 5

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Jake Bauers matched a career high with four hits while driving in three runs and the Cleveland bullpen bailed Trevor Bauer out of a late jam in a win over Kansas City.

Bauer (7-6) worked six innings and allowed 11 hits and five earned runs, striking out six.

Most of Cleveland's damage came against Jakob Junis (4-8), who matched a season high by allowing six earned runs over 4 2/3 innings. The only bright spots for the Royals were Jorge Soler and Adalberto Mondesi. Soler's towering solo home run in the second traveled an estimated 451 feet, while Mondesi trumpeted his return from the injured list with a two-run homer in the fifth.

ATHLETICS 8, TWINS 6

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Chris Herrmann hit a grand slam in his first game as Oakland beat Minnesota for its fourth straight victory. Herrmann was activated from the injured list after being sidelined since spring training with a knee injury. He connected off All-Star Jake Odorizzi (10-4) to give the A's a 6-3 lead in the fourth inning.

Odorizzi allowed six runs — five earned — and four hits in three-plus innings.

Matt Olson added a two-run homer, Mark Canha hit a solo shot and Robbie Grossman had an RBI single for the A's, who have won 11 of 14 games.

Daniel Mengden (3-1) allowed five runs and eight hits in 5 2/3 innings. Liam Hendriks pitched the ninth for his third save.

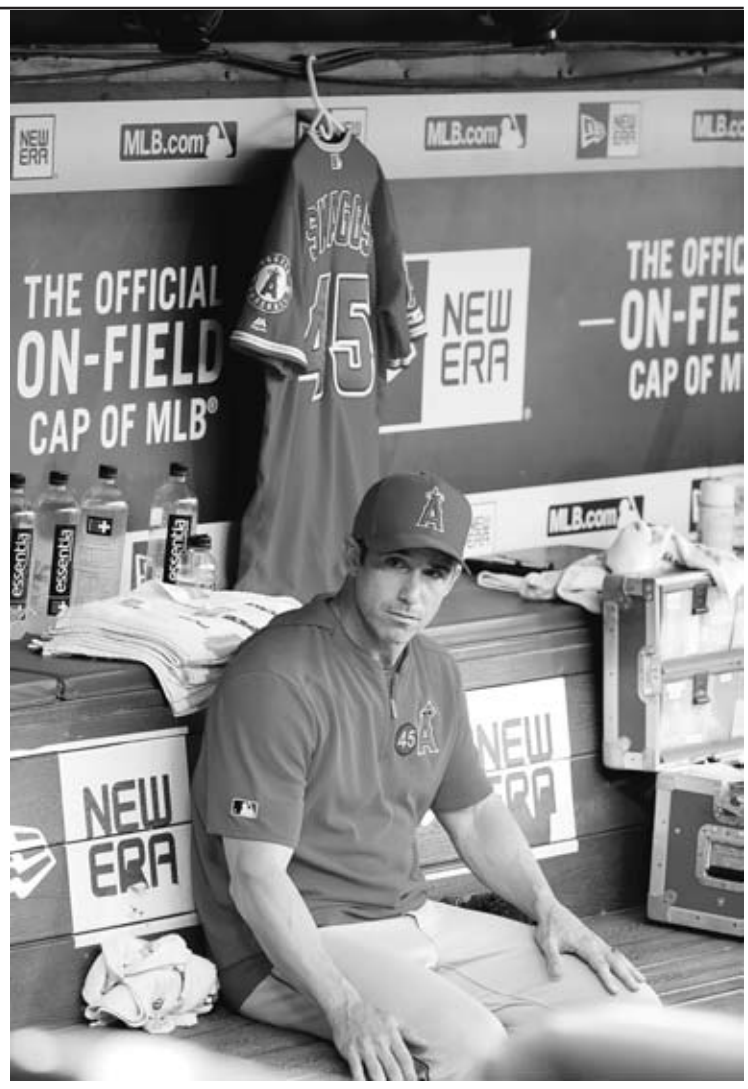
Jason Castro hit two solo homers and Miguel Sano had a two-run shot for the Twins.

MARINERS 5, CARDINALS 4

SEATTLE (AP) — Tim Beckham hit a pinch-hit homer in the eighth inning and Seattle beat St. Louis.

Omar Narvaez also homered for the Mariners, who overcame early and late bullpen troubles and snapped a four-game losing streak. Beckham hit the third pinch-hit homer of his career and 13th home run of the season off Giovanny Gallegos (1-1) to break a 4-all tie.

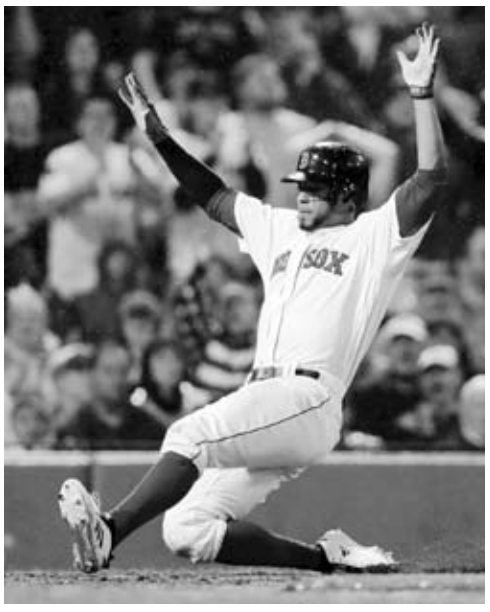
Yairo Munoz, in the lineup for the injured Matt Carpenter, tied the game at 4-4 in the seventh with a two-out, two-run homer. Mariners reliever Austin Adams (1-0) entered and struck out the four batters he faced to set up Beckham. Roenis Elias pitched the ninth for his 11th save.❑



Los Angeles Angels manager Brad Ausmus sits on the bench in front of the jersey of Tyler Skaggs during a baseball game against the Texas Rangers in Arlington, Texas, Tuesday, July 2, 2019.

Associated Press

Injured AL All-Stars replaced by Lowe, Bogaerts and Berríos



Boston Red Sox's Xander Bogaerts scores on a Christian Vazquez two-RBI single during the third inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox at Fenway Park in Boston, Tuesday, June 25, 2019.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press

Los Angeles Angels second baseman Tommy La Stella has been replaced on the American League All-Star team, a day after fouling a 97 mph fastball off his right shin and leaving a game against the Texas Rangers. A first-time All-Star named as a reserve, La Stella was supposed to be replaced by Tampa Bay's Brandon Lowe for next week's game in Cleveland. But Lowe's status also is questionable because of a right leg injury. Lowe also fouled a ball off his leg and left a game Tuesday night.

Major League Baseball also announced Wednesday that José Berríos will fill in for fellow Minnesota right-hander Jake Odorizzi, who left Tuesday's game in Oakland with a blister on right middle finger and was headed for the injured list. Hunter Pence, the Rangers outfielder selected by fans to be the starting designated hitter, was replaced on the AL team by Xander Bogaerts of Boston. Pence has been out since June 16 with a right groin strain and was pulled off his rehab assignment Tuesday after re-aggravating the injury during a minor league game.❑

Rapinoe says she's a proud American, addresses the critics

By ANNE M. PETERSON
AP Sports Writer

LYON, France (AP) — Still facing a backlash over saying she wouldn't visit the White House if the United States wins the World Cup, Megan Rapinoe said Wednesday that she considers herself a proud American.

"I think that I'm particularly, uniquely and very deeply American," she said. "If we want to talk about the ideals that we stand for, the song and the anthem, and what we were founded on, I think I'm extremely American."

Rapinoe commented on the dustup a day after the U.S. team's nail-biting 2-1 semifinal win over England. Rapinoe did not play against England because of a minor hamstring injury, but said she'd be ready to go for the final Sunday.

Last week in the days leading up to the quarterfinal against France, a video surfaced of Rapinoe's White House comment, which she punctuated with an expletive.

While the interview was from January, it attracted President Donald Trump's attention and he tweeted: "Megan should never disrespect our Country, the White House, or our Flag, especially since so much has been done for her & the team." Trump added that he would invite the team to Washington, win or lose.

Rapinoe has stood by her statement, except for the coarse language she used.

Rapinoe is known for being outspoken and using colorful language. She has been particularly vocal about equitable pay and the treatment of female athletes, while also critical of FIFA for not investing more in the women's game.

Two years ago, Rapinoe kneeled during the national anthem before a few matches. She said she took the action in solidarity with Colin Kaepernick, the former San Francisco 49ers quarterback who knelt during the anthem to call attention to racial inequality.

U.S. Soccer responded by adopting a rule that says players must stand for anthems.

In France she has not sung the anthem or put her hand on her heart while it plays before each game.

"I think for the detractors I would have them look hard into what I'm actually saying and the actions that I'm taking. Maybe you don't agree with every single way that I do it and that can be discussed. I know I'm not perfect," she said.

United States' Megan Rapinoe kicks a ball during a training session of the US Women's Soccer team at a training ground in Lyon, France, Monday, July 1, 2019.

Associated Press

In her impassioned comments, she said she believes she stands for truth and honesty, and "wanting to have the conversation."

"I feel very fortunate to be in this country, I'd never be able to do this in a lot of other places," she said. "But also, that doesn't mean that we can't get better, it doesn't mean that we can't strive to be better. I think this country was founded on a lot of great ideals, but it was also founded on slavery. I think we just need to be really honest about that, and be really open in talking about that so we can reconcile that and hopefully move forward and make this make country better for everyone."

Rapinoe hasn't been the only American who has faced criticism at the World Cup. The whole team was chastised when players celebrated every goal in a 13-0 rout of Thailand to open the tournament. Alex Morgan's tea-sipping celebration after her goal against England was also knocked.

"Wah, wah, wah. We're at the World Cup. I don't think anyone truly believes we disrespect the game or our opponents," Rapinoe said. "What do you want us to do? We work hard, we like to play hard."❑

Dutch beat Swedes to set up Women's World Cup final with U.S.

By ROB HARRIS
AP Global Soccer Writer

LYON, France (AP) — The Netherlands will play the United States for the Women's World Cup title after Jackie Groenen sealed a 1-0 victory over Sweden in extra time on Wednesday night.

A slick passing sequence ended in the 99th minute with Groenen driving a shot from outside the penalty area past goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl. It was Groenen's first goal of the tournament and it set up a meeting between the European champions and the reigning world champions back in the Stade de Lyon on Sunday.

And it means that for the first time since 2003, the final will include two female coaches. With Jill Ellis coaching the U.S. and Sarina Wiegman in charge of the Netherlands, the run of three finals featuring a male coach comes to an end.

Netherlands' Jackie Groenen scores her side's opening goal during the Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between the Netherlands and Sweden, at the Stade de Lyon outside Lyon, France, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

Progress for the Dutch women has been rapid. They only debuted at the World Cup in 2015 — reaching the round of 16 — but followed it up by winning the European Championship on home soil in 2017.

After a draining semifinal, the Dutch have one less day than the Americans to prepare for the title game and they will have to be more potent up front to overcome the athletic U.S.

The second semifinal was no match for the drama, tension and high energy of the previous night when the U.S. beat England 2-1.

The game featured few scoring chances and was only lit up by the goalkeeping in regulation time — particularly in the second half.

A shot from Nilla Fischer was creeping into the net in the 56th minute until Netherlands goalkeeper Sari van Veenendaal tipped it onto the post.

It was the crossbar that denied the Dutch in the 64th minute when a header from Vivianne Miedema was pushed onto the frame by Lindahl's fingertips.

But the goalkeepers wouldn't be relied on for a penalty shootout.

Groenen, who in May became the first overseas signing for new English Women's Super League team Manchester United, produced a moment of brilliance in the first half of extra time for her first goal of the tournament.

The Swedes will have to settle for bronze if they can beat England on Saturday in Nice. But the focus for now will be on the health of Kosovare Asllani, who was carried off on a stretcher late in the game.❑

A general view of New National Stadium is seen during a media tour Wednesday, July 3, 2019, in Tokyo. The stadium will host the opening and closing ceremonies at the 2020 Summer Olympics.
Associated Press

Tokyo Olympic stadium 90% complete; opening set for December

By STEPHEN WADE
AP Sports Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Tokyo's new National Stadium is 90% completed with the opening of the Olympics just over a year away.

Media were given a glimpse inside the $1.25 billion stadium on Wednesday. It is located in central Tokyo and will be the scene of the opening ceremony on July 24, 2020. It will also be the venue for track and field and some soccer.

Organizers say they are planning events in December to inaugurate the new stadium, which was designed by Japanese architect Kengo Kuma.

The new stadium design was first awarded to British architect Zaha Hadid, but eventually the futuristic design was scrapped by the government as the cost soared toward $2 billion.

Organizers say about 45,000 of the 60,000 permanent seats have been installed, and the grass surface should be down by the end of the month. The all-weather track will be installed in August and September.

Including the stadium, Tokyo is building eight new venues for the Olympics. The other 35 venues for the games are defined as "temporary" or older buildings that are being reused, which Tokyo organizers say has saved billions. The other centerpiece for the games will be the Olympic Village for more than 10,000 athletes being built on the edge of Tokyo Bay.

The Summer Olympics don't come cheaply, and even existing venues need extensive renovation when the Games come to town. Exact costs — what are, and are not Olympic expenses — are difficult to sort out. But Tokyo is spending at least $20 billion to get ready, 70% of which is taxpayers' money.❑

In this March 10, 2019, file photo, Winnipeg Jets defenseman Jacob Trouba (8) skates with the puck during the first period of an NHL hockey game against the Washington Capitals in Washington.
Associated Press

NHL's restricted free agents have proven to be untouchables

By LARRY LAGE
AP Hockey Writer

Some of the NHL's best, young players are available.

Technically.

Mitch Marner, Brayden Point and Jacob Trouba are just a few of the restricted free agents in a bumper crop.

Every team in the league would like to add any of those players this summer. However, it would be a big surprise in the NHL if any team tries to sign them away. The Montreal Canadiens became the first franchise in six years to extend an offer sheet to a restricted free agent earlier this week, hoping the Carolina Hurricanes would pass on matching the $42 million, five-year deal for Sebastian Aho. Less than 24 hours later, Hurricanes general manager Don Waddell announced the franchise was going to keep its star forward . Drafting and developing players is what NHL teams attempt to do well as they chase the Stanley Cup, certainly in the salary cap era. And, that is one of the reasons teams are reluctant to extend offer sheets to restricted free agents.

"The way the system is set up with offer sheets, it's too punitive because of the draft picks you have to give up," said sports agent Kurt Overhardt, who represents Trouba. "The record has shown it doesn't make sense for a lot of teams. Montreal took a chance, forcing a notoriously frugal owner to make a decision and he matched. But as long as you have the cap space, you have to match."

If Carolina chose not to match the offer for Aho, the Canadiens would have given up a draft pick in the first, second and third rounds. If Montreal offered a little more money on the offer sheet, it risked losing an additional first-round selection. And if the franchise offered Aho an average of at least $10,568,590 over the course of the contract, it would have lost four first-round picks if the Hurricanes refused to pay Aho that much.

Agents of restricted free agents attempt to use the possibility of offer sheets in negotiations. Teams, meanwhile, know offer sheets are extremely uncommon and they seem to have the power in talks. That is true particularly when players don't have arbitration rights.

"As an RFA you just want to be paid what you feel your value is and the offer sheet is one of a few points of leverage you can use," Winnipeg Jets center Andrew Copp said. "It's more important to have arbitration rights, but you only have so many options as a restricted player so it can be frustrating not being able to use one of your options."❑

Endless Vacation

By Dr. Carlos Viana

Aruba, with our beautiful beaches and perfect climate is an endless vacation paradise. However, the summer is traditionally known as "vacation time." With the children home from school, people make extensive plans to catch up on all the things they never seem to have enough time to do. They arrange elaborate family reunions and fly off to more exotic locations.

Traditionally, we vacation for several reasons. Though not all countries have evolved into the practice of vacationing, most do provide some time off for newly married couples. The "honeymoon," originally month long, was a reprieve from daily pressures where almost total strangers could adjust to living with another person. Today the "honeymoon" can be an extension of the courting period where new couples can agree on goals of their joint lives together.

A second reason for a vacation is the "second honeymoon." Special observances of wedding anniversaries are usually reserved for milestone dates like the tenth, twenty-fifth and the "golden" fiftieth anniversaries. During these honeymoon replays, some couples have a ceremony where wedding vows are repeated. This vacation then serves as a reaffirmation of the original hopes and aspirations for their marriage.

A third reason is a school break. School breaks were originally provided because children were essential in agricultural areas. In North America, school summer vacation is three months long because immigrants could not exclude their children from the farming demands during the short growing season. Similarly, the spring recess coincides with the labor intensive period when live stock gave birth and crops needed to be sowed and the fall break coincides with the traditional harvest period.

A forth reason for a rest is health related. Without question, the greatest health benefit is where a vacation helps in your stress reduction program. My father, who lived ninety six robust years, told me several times, a heart attack is natures way of telling you to slow down. Someone with ailing health has few prospects. Sickness carries a message that only the wisest heed.

A fifth motivation for a vacation is a respite from our profession or occupation. This break could be the most important. We labor frantically to make ourselves more comfortable and end up with the byproduct of modern society, stress. Continuing stress causes a whole host of health problems. A recent survey reported forty percent of North Americans are suffering from chronic stress. Stress is what pushes some people decide to finally take a vacation. Early signs of stress are Mother Nature's way of telling us something is wrong and needs our attention. A break from work could be vital to our well being. Unfortunately this critical period is also he least respected. Weekly, we observe tourists trying to accomplish the most possible during their vacation. Enjoying all that the Island has to offer, they are partying, gambling, and frantically pursuing their hobbies. Their motto is "work hard, play hard."

Although the exercise we do on vacation can be a good stress reducer, moderate exercise needs to be done on a regular basis to contribute to overall health. Not working out the rest of the year and then overdoing it on vacation causes more stress. Many people need to return home to their "normal" lives to recuperate from their vacation. These people may have had a temporary break from their work and problems, but they certainly have not benefited physiologically from their vacation.

It has been estimated that managers spend at least 25 percent of their time resolving workplace conflicts – causing lowered office performance. Some companies are resorting to making their employees to take vacation days or "time out" in order to improve their profit margin. In our clinic we see many of our patients take a mini vacation or "time out" when they come in for an acupuncture session.

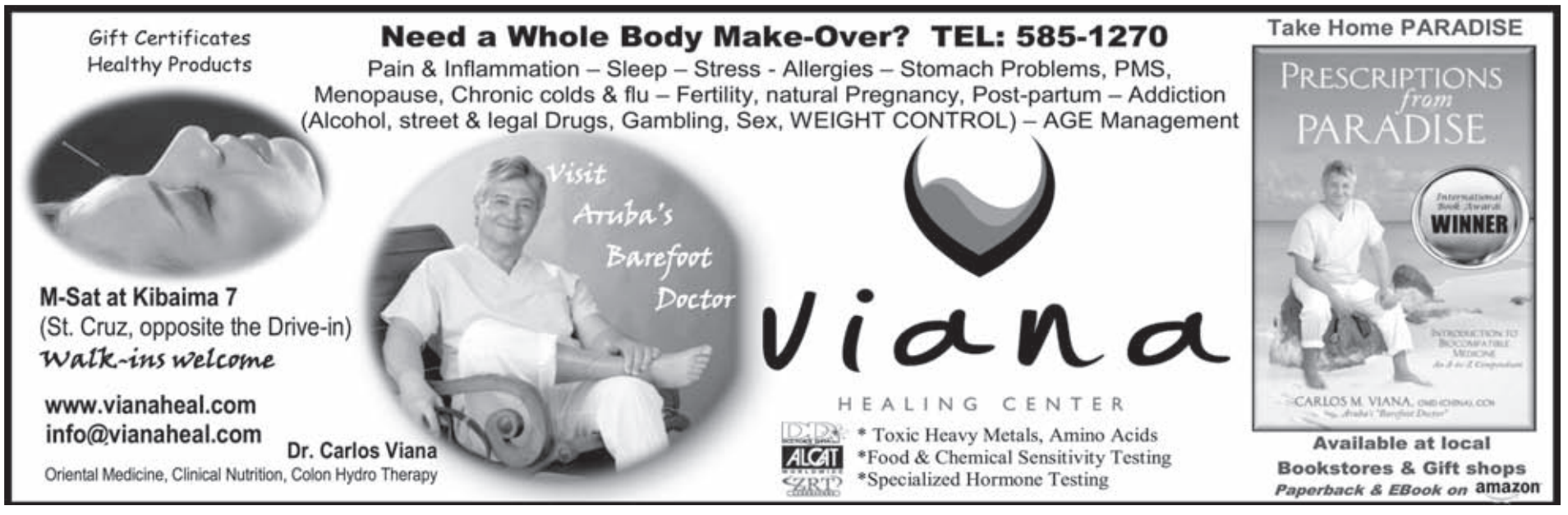
Acupuncture, an ancient Chinese therapy that is becoming more widespread in the West uses various procedures, such as heat and pressure but mainly fine needles, to stimulate points on the body to relieve pain by rebalancing the flow of energy. The world health organization has listed many conditions treated safely and effectively by acupuncture including, allergies, hypertension, injuries, chronic pain, depression and fatigue.

Many of these are interrelated with stress. While many of our patients come in for their twenty minute session to relieve pain; our policy of turning cell phones off or on silent allows our clients to more fully relax. After their sessions many realize that the treatment has gone beyond pain reduction and they feel a balance and harmony in their body, mind and spirit.

My father once told me that he had never heard anyone state in their closing years that they wished that they had worked harder. In our pursuit to make ourselves more comfortable, our daily affairs have a way of obscuring more important issues. Issues we ignore until we are forced to retire or Mother Nature gives us her message in sickness.

Get the point, a diversion from daily responsibilities can rejuvenate our lives. Either this weekend at home, or this summer spent in an exotic place like Aruba, take time to reflect on health. Schedule a spa treatment between water sports and rounds of golf. Have some tropical fruit on the breakfast buffet instead of coffee and toast, put away the laptop and enjoy the view.

Come in for an acupuncture "time out." If you're ready for a complete make-over, whether you're visiting or live in the land of endless vacationers, at our natural healing center, we do full health evaluations, based on science, but with a stress free, barefoot, Island flavor. Call us for a mini or maxi vacation that can have effects that last long after the break. ❑



Already cautious businesses grow even more wary about hiring

By JOYCE M. ROSENBERG
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Corri Smith is planning to hire a full-time project manager for her public relations firm and make her part-time assistant full-time. But she has a wary eye on the economy.

"It's been a long time since we've had some trouble in the economy. It can't all be wonderful — something will happen," says Smith, owner of Charlotte, North Carolina-based Black Wednesday.

Smith, who believes an economic downturn is likely in the next 12 to 18 months, says. "I will be extra cautious with hiring alongside also making plans to stockpile and save revenue."

She's aware that marketing is one of the first budget items to be slashed when corporate executives are anxious about profits.

Small business owners, who have taken a conservative approach to hiring during the economic expansion, are becoming even more careful amid concerns that the economy is weakening. They're well aware that economists believe the country's gross domestic product slowed considerably in the second quarter — forecasts give the GDP an annual rate of about 2%, down from 3.1% in the first quarter. Owners' concerns and caution are increased by the Trump administration's trade wars.

Some owners are cutting jobs, likely by not filling their open positions as well as by laying off workers. A report from payroll processor ADP released Wednesday showed that its business customers with up to 49 employees cut 23,000 jobs in June on top of a 38,000 reduction in May; this is the first time ADP has reported job cuts since September 2017. So far this year, small businesses have added about 25,000 jobs on average each month, compared with an average 52,000 last year and 56,000 in 2017. Their hiring pace has lagged behind that of larger companies, which have fed the hiring boom in the country the past few years.

In this Monday, July 1, 2019, photo, software engineer Joe Wilson works in his home in Highlands Ranch, Colo.

Although the Great Recession ended 10 years ago, small business hiring never recovered to the levels before the downturn began in 2007. Owners who had laid off workers didn't want to go through that devastating process again, and new entrepreneurs learned from the unhappy experiences of others.

Hiring is an ongoing balancing act for Scott Fish and business partner Sonja Skvarla, co-owners of Off Road, a business consulting firm based in Portland, Oregon.

"Businesses are charging ahead, but there is a small element of uncertainty in the economy, and we are noticing that it continues to be on the minds of business owners," says Fish,

So although Fish and Skvarla are considering as many as five new staffers over the next year, they're also treading carefully, hoping that their hiring is in sync with the work clients have for them.

"It's a chicken-before-the-egg thing — do you have enough clients to support the cost of hiring someone great, or do you hire some great people and hope the revenue comes in," Fish says.

"All of them decided to table not just my work but other companies' as well. It was shocking and sudden," Segal says. There are currently about 10 freelancers working at Philadelphia-based Segal & Co.

Many small businesses also struggle to find qualified workers. While that can be a problem for companies of all sizes, small businesses generally can't offer the salaries and benefits that big corporations do, and with an economy that's looking iffy, the smaller player are at an even greater disadvantage.

Because of competition for staffers from giants like Google, Facebook and Netflix, not only does software maker Gunner Technology not expect to hire in the next year, "we are looking at how we can get by without replacing employees we are sure to lose," CEO Cody Swann says.

Swann's solution is to automate some of the work that software developers generally do at his Las Vegas-based company; for example, reviewing software coding to detect errors.

The tariffs that the Trump administration has placed on thousands of products imported from China and retaliatory duties placed on U.S. goods are affecting many small businesses, even if they're not importers or exporters. Software manufacture Joe Wilson might have to put off hiring freelancers if he feels the ripple effects of tariffs that his customers must pay.

"These issues impact the economy and people's confidence in the economy. It's easy for a business to defer spending money on a software project for a couple of quarters if they are worried about these things impacting their sector," says Wilson, owner of Volare Systems, based in Highlands Ranch, Colorado.

Wilson uses freelancers because his work often involves customers' projects rather than their ongoing needs. He has three now, and hopes to hire two to five more in the next six months to a year — as long as the economy and/or tariff issues don't slow his business. ❑

US services companies grow more slowly in June

By PAUL WISEMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. services companies grew at a slower pace in June as the pace of hiring, orders and production decelerated.

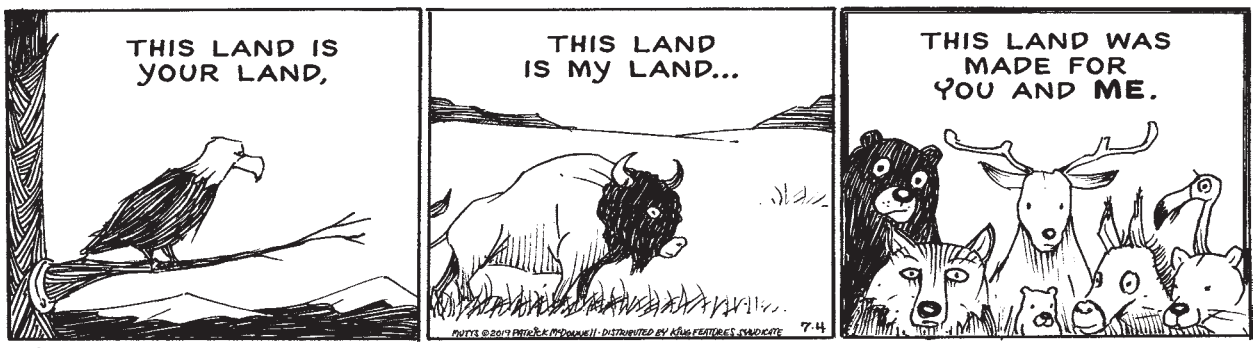
The Institute for Supply Management, an association of purchasing managers, says its non-manufacturing index fell to 55.1 from 56.9 in May. Anything above 50 signals growth, though, and the services sector is enjoying a 113-month winning streak. Sixteen services industries reported growth last month, led by real estate.

Services dominate the American economy, accounting for 84% of private-sector jobs. Some respondents to the ISM survey expressed concern about heightened trade tensions — though the overall results remained healthy. President Donald Trump has imposed tariffs on $250 billion in Chinese imports as the two countries seek to settle their differences over Beijing's aggressive trade policies.❑

In this June 19, 2019, photo a worker balances on a steep roof as he lays down shingles on a roof on a new house in a Brandon, Miss., neighborhood.

Associated Press

Mutts



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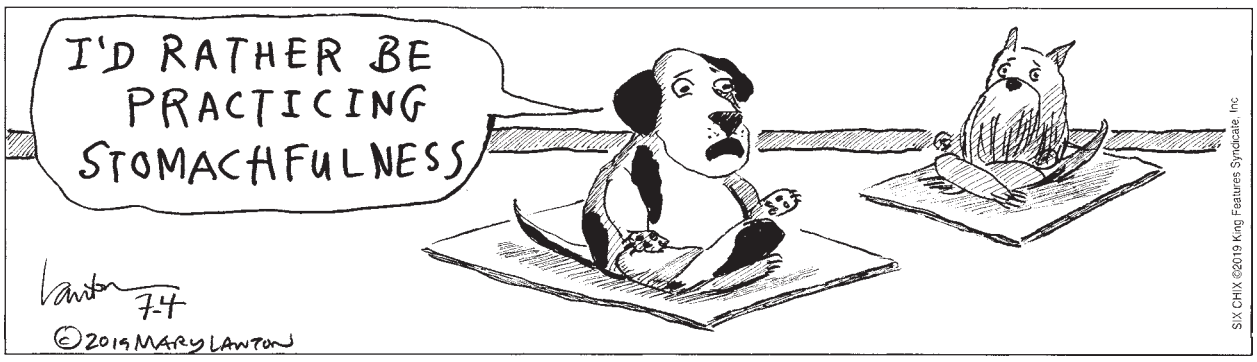

Blondie

Mother Goose & Grimm

Baby Blues

Zits

Conceptis Sudoku

6		8	4			3		
				6		4		
5							2	7
3					2			
	2						6	
			9					8
9	5							4
		1		3				
		4			6	8		2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/04

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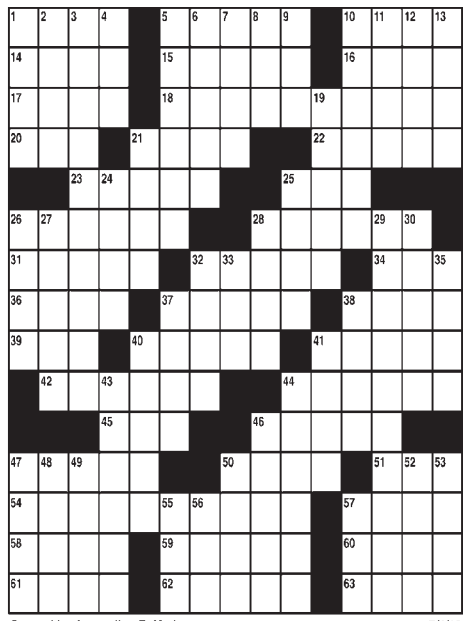
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

9	2	4	1	5	3	6	8	7
6	1	7	4	8	9	3	2	5
5	3	8	6	7	2	9	4	1
1	9	2	5	3	4	8	7	6
7	4	6	9	1	8	2	5	3
3	8	5	7	2	6	1	9	4
2	5	1	3	9	7	4	6	8
8	6	3	2	4	5	7	1	9
4	7	9	8	6	1	5	3	2



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 7/4/19

ACROSS

1 Group of cattle
5 Prefix for violet or sound
10 Eyebrow shape
14 __ tea
15 Removes apple skins
16 Feast with a roast pig
17 "My Country, 'Tis of __"
18 __ over; proving more powerful than
20 Layer of turf
21 Blaze
22 Queues
23 Oneness
25 Perish
26 Actress Tyson
28 Wild animals
31 Give a speech
32 Tire ridge pattern
34 Shoot carefully
36 Tigers & tabbies
37 Customer
38 Isn't __ to; can't
39 Feasted
40 Postpone
41 Chicago team
42 Accompany & protect
44 Jails
45 Carpet
46 Group led by a teacher
47 Scour
50 Laugh loudly
51 Small vegetable
54 Stretchiness
57 Rocky __ ice cream
58 Mom's sister
59 Take one bite of
60 Circle dance
61 Table supports
62 Piece of asparagus
63 "You __ live once!"

DOWN

1 Punches
2 Canyon sound
3 Teaches again
4 ...FDR, HST, __, JFK...
5 Snobbish
6 One of the Three Stooges
7 Pine or palm
8 Gun the engine
9 As happy __ clam
10 Friendly nations
11 Destroy
12 Walking stick
13 Caresses
19 Epic poem by Homer
21 Rank's partner, in phrase
24 Trawler's needs
25 Precious
26 __-Cola
27 Furious
28 Lager
29 Piece of silverware
30 __ as a goose
32 Clump of feathers
33 Bread variety
35 Clutter
37 Titanic's downfall
38 Diving seabirds
40 Be skeptical
41 Male animal
43 Pie bottoms
44 Athlete
46 Terra-__; patio pot clay
47 Marine mammal
48 Evidence
49 __ up; phoned, to a Brit
50 Ascend
52 James __ Jones
53 "__ in the Life"; Beatles song
55 "__ a jungle out there!"
56 Bottle part
57 Greek letter

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	P	A	T			S	C	O	T		C	L	O	D
P	A	C	E	D		P	A	I	R		H	O	N	E
U	N	C	L	E		A	L	L	O	W	A	N	C	E
D	E	E		F	A	N			M	A	N	G	E	R
		N	E	A	R	S			B	I	G			
A	T	T	A	C	K			J	O	S	E	P	H	
R	O	U	T	E		P	O	I	N	T		R	A	M
T	W	A	S		P	L	U	M	E		F	E	T	A
S	E	T		T	H	U	R	S		S	A	F	E	S
	D	E	B	R	A	S			P	U	R	E	S	T
			R	A	N			G	O	M	E	R		
A	G	H	A	S	T			R	I	M		E	L	F
I	R	O	N	H	O	R	S	E		E	R	N	I	E
L	O	R	D		M	I	K	E		D	U	C	K	S
S	W	A	Y		S	P	I	N			M	E	E	T

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Mayim Bialik: Don't forget the vegans this July 4th

By KATIE CAMPIONE
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Fourth of July often means hot dogs and hamburgers sizzling on an open fire, but Mayim Bialik is pleading with all those grill masters out there to not ignore their vegan guests.

"A lot of people want more plant-based food," the actress said recently. "It doesn't have to be just the food for people who eat weird." The "Big Bang Theory" actress, who wrapped her last season as neuroscientist Amy Farrah Fowler earlier this year, said people who avoid animal products like her and her kids get excited when chefs include food they can eat.

"There are more of us out there and we do like to go to barbecues, too," she said. "There are so many more vegan options than when I became vegan."

The former star of "Blossom," a spokeswoman for Sabra hummus, pointed to a range of favorites, from Asian dishes to fruit and, of course, hummus, as simple go-tos for the summer party season. ❑

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Scientists sound alarm after 6 rare whale deaths in a month

By PATRICK WHITTLE
Associated Press

A half-dozen North Atlantic right whales have died in the past month, leading scientists, government officials and conservationists to call for a swift response to protect the endangered species.

There are only a little more than 400 of the right whales left. All six of the dead whales have been found in the Gulf of St. Lawrence off Canada, and at least three appear to have died after they were hit by ships.

The deaths have led scientists to sound the alarm about a potentially catastrophic loss to the population. The deaths are especially troubling because they include females, said Philip Hamilton, research scientist with the Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium.

"If we're going to have deaths, they just can't be female," Hamilton said, adding the population is down to only about 100 reproductive females.

"We need a different system."

Right whales have suffered high mortality and poor reproduction in recent years, particularly in 2017. The whales appear to be traveling in different areas of the ocean than usual because of food availability, said Nick Record, senior research scientist at Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences in Maine.

That shift, linked to the warming of the ocean, has apparently brought whales outside protected zones and left them vulnerable, he said.

"Animals like whales that have to figure out where their food is, they have to figure out a new environment as they go," Record said. "You can almost think of the whales like climate migration."

In this March 28, 2018, file photo, a North Atlantic right whale feeds on the surface of Cape Cod bay off the coast of Plymouth, Mass.

Associated Press

Right whales are so named because they were considered the "right whale" to hunt during the commercial whaling era of long ago. They could often be hunted close to the coast and provided a reliable source of whale oil, a precious commodity of the time.

Those characteristics led to the decimation of the population, and it has struggled to rebuild since. The animals numbered as few as about 270 as recently as 1990, and as many as about 480 in 2010.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada said Tuesday that the necropsy of the sixth whale, which was named Clipper, was completed in Quebec, and that the animal's death appeared consistent with blunt trauma from a vessel strike.

Ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear are two top threats to right whales often cited by conservationists.

A speed restriction of 10 knots in the area where the whale was first observed remained in effect, the agency said. It also said it has increased surveillance over the Gulf of St. Lawrence to assess the location of the whales and make sure mariners comply with rules.

Chris Oliver, assistant administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service, said Wednesday he is calling for a meeting with the Canadian government to request "immediate action to provide comprehensive protection" for the whales.

"Preventing any additional deaths of North Atlantic right whales is our highest priority. To do this, we must work with our partners to strengthen protections immediately," Oliver said in a statement.❑

Scholars say Philistine genes help solve biblical mystery

By ILAN BEN ZION
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Goliath the Greek? Human remains from an ancient cemetery in southern Israel have yielded precious bits of DNA that a new study says help prove the European origin of the Philistines — the enigmatic nemeses of the biblical Israelites.

The Philistines mostly resided in five cities along the southern coast of what is today Israel and the Gaza Strip during the early Iron Age, around 3,000 years ago. In the Bible, David fought the Philistine giant Goliath in a duel, and Samson slew a thousand of their warriors with the jawbone of an ass.

The Philistines emerged as other societies around the eastern Mediterranean collapsed, possibly because of a cataclysmic intersection of climate change and man-made disasters. Philistine ceramics bear similarities to styles found in the Aegean, but concrete evidence of their geographic origins has remained elusive.

This Tuesday, June 28, 2016 file photo shows an archeologist taking notes at an ancient Phillstine cemetery near Ashkelon, Israel.

Associated Press

Now, a study of genetic material extracted from skeletons unearthed in the Israeli coastal city of Ashkelon in 2013 has found a DNA link. It connects the Philistines to populations in southern Europe during the Bronze Age.

The study, spearheaded by researchers from Germany's Max Planck Institute and Wheaton College in Illinois, was published Wednesday in the research journal Science Advances.

The biblical account relates that the Philistines originally hailed from a distant isle. An Egyptian temple built by Rameses III bears reliefs of battles with "Sea Peoples" who appeared on the shores of the eastern Mediterranean. One group listed in the Egyptian text is strikingly similar to the Hebrew name for Philistines. Excavations of Philistine sites have found ceramics and architecture that differed from those of their neighbors in ancient Canaan.❑

Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: Hook and Cook your Own Fish!

Oranjestad- Rennaissance Marina Downtown is home to the Driftwood Fishing Charters, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant Driftwood. Herby senior and Herby Junior both share a passion and love for fishing. They know what the local waters have to offer and what fresh fish really means. Over 30 years ago, the idea for the fishing charter was born.

Captain Herby would catch the fish to be served at the restaurant the same day. That concept still lives, what is 'hooked' during the day is cooked in the evening at the restaurant.

Herby shares his experience with his crew, who take out guests daily on their tournament rigged 35ft twin engine Bertram "Driftwood" or on their more spacious 37ft twin engine Bertram called "Living Easy". Both yachts are available for charters from 8am to 12 noon, or from 1 to 5pm (6-hour trips also available). To book a fishing charter visit www.driftwoodfishingcharters.com or call Herbert direct at (297)-5924040.

Have an authentic seafood dining experience at Driftwood Restaurant, situated in the characteristic downtown Oranjestad. This comfortable downtown restaurant has a long tradition (30 years) of serving the freshest fish, the biggest shrimp, and the most succulent Caribbean Lobster.

Opening Hours: 5:00pm to 10.30pm (closed on Sundays)

For reservations visit www.driftwoodaruba.com or call (297)-5832515

Address: Klipstraat 12. Oranjestad, Aruba

Woody Allen makes La Scala debut directing comic opera

By COLLEEN BARRY
Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — Woody Allen said Tuesday as he prepared for his directing debut at Milan's La Scala opera house that he has "always had a warm and affectionate following in Europe." Allen was greeted with applause at a news conference ahead of the weekend premiere at La Scala of Puccini's comic one-act opera "Gianni Schicchi" with the prolific filmmaker as director.

Unlike in Hollywood, the 83-year-old Allen's acceptance in Europe appears largely untouched by allegations of sexual misconduct that have been revisited in the wake of the #MeToo movement.

In the United States, Amazon Studios terminated an agreement to distribute his latest film, "A Rainy Day in New York." The film will be released in the fall across Europe. Two of the film's stars have said they would donate their salaries to charities fighting sexual abuse.

Director Woody Allen attends a press conference at La Scala opera house, in Milan, Italy, Tuesday, July 2, 2019.
Associated Press

Alongside the La Scala production, a cinema museum in Milan is showing a retrospective of 28 Allen films. After Saturday's "Gianni Schicchi" premiere, Allen said he plans to travel to San Sebastian, Spain to work on his next film. The cast includes Christoph Waltz.

Allen said that his work "resonates with Europeans in a way that they relate to."

"I know when I started making movies 50 years ago or almost 50 years ago, for whatever reason I always had a very warm and affectionate following in Europe," he said. "And even when films of mine were not as well received in the United States, always in Italy, France and Germany, all over Europe, they received my films well." He continued: "Maybe when I grew up, I was an addict for European films, I watched them all the time. Maybe through some process of osmosis my films resonate with Europeans. " Allen's "Gianni Schicchi," which he first staged in Los Angeles, is being performed alongside Salieri's "First the Music, Then the Words" directed by Grischa Asagaroff. Most of the performers are students from La Scala's academy.

Allen said he was persuaded by Placido Domingo to direct opera - but it took him a long time to come around. "I didn't know if I had any ability to do this sort of thing. I had done cinema and not even that much stage work. I found it to be a very enjoyable experience," Allen said.

The director said he long enjoyed listening to opera, but usually sees only the first two acts of a production due to early-morning filming schedules. "What I always wanted was an evening of just third acts, so I could see all the third acts I missed over the years," he said. Allen's said he staged "Gianni Schicchi" in the neorealist style of 1950s directors like Vittorio De Sica and Federico Fellini -- after ideas to make Schicchi a rat among mice or a cigarette among organic produce were rejected.

He said he would have preferred a different ending for the opera, based on an incident in Dante's "Divine Comedy," which sees the title character condemned to hell for profiting from a ruse. "I have a weakness for people who live on the margins of society and slightly outside of the law, so have I have great affection for Gianni Schicchi," Allen said. "I would not put him in hell at the end of the movie. I would retire him with a good pension and let him go off and lead a very happy life in the country. "❑

Florence Pugh goes down a dark rabbit hole in 'Midsommar'

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — How does one willingly, even eagerly, walk into a sunlit nightmare like Ari Aster's "Midsommar"? For Florence Pugh, the motivation came while watching the camera zoom between Toni Collette's legs in a particularly balletic moment during the feverish climax of Aster's debut, "Hereditary."

"I remember imagining what she would have had to do. I thought: 'Yeah, I really want to be a part of this,'" recalls Pugh. "It's not like I go: 'I really want to play a lady who goes insane in a field.'"

In "Midsommar," Pugh stars as Dani Ardor, a grief-stricken college student who shortly after her family is killed is a grisly manner, joins her long-term boyfriend (Jack Reynor) and his friends on a summer trip to the pastoral Swedish compound of Harga. She goes full of existential dread and relationship anxiety; their inevitable break-up has been merely postponed by Dani's tragedy. The increasingly dark and hallucinogenic pagan rituals of a seemingly idyllic ancient Swedish cult, it turns out, are less than ideal couples therapy.

This image released by A24 shows Jack Reynor and Florence Pugh, left, in a scene from the horror film "Midsommar."

Associated Press

The movie, which A24 will release in theaters Wednesday, wasn't a natural choice for Pugh, the 23-year-old British actress. She doesn't like horror movies. But she was drawn by the precision of Aster's choreography, the brokenness of his characters and the appeal of jumping down a twisted rabbit hole.

"There was something about her insanity at the end that I knew I would enjoy, and I knew I needed to do," Pugh said in a recent interview. "I had never played anyone like that before and that was so exciting. She doesn't get better. She gets more confused but in that confusion, she is released. And that is fascinating."

In her short and rapidly expanding career, Pugh has shown a knack for transformation. She has played characters who, with or without sanity intact, come into their own. In her 2017 breakthrough, William Oldroyd's "Lady Macbeth," she played a fiery young Victorian woman who, having been married into a pitiless and drab English household, madly seizes her own freedom. In Stephen Merchant's "Fighting With my Family," released earlier this year, she played a working-class English girl who conquers long odds and self-doubt to become a WWE professional wrestler. "There's always something appealing about a change and about someone brewing into their own body and into their own self," says Pugh.

It would be convenient to say that Pugh, too, is brewing into herself. And that's true to a certain extent. Days after Pugh spoke, she was to begin production on Marvel's Black Widow standalone film, co-starring alongside Scarlett Johansson. Later this year, she'll co-star in Greta Gerwig's "Little Women," one of the year's most anticipated films. Her fame is set to grow exponentially.

But Pugh also seems already fully formed. She grew up in a large, creative family in Oxford. Her mother teaches dance and two of her siblings also act, including Toby Sebastian who appeared in "Game of Thrones." She has a poise and directness to her that, combined with the vibrancy of her performances, has frequently led to comparisons to Kate Winslet.

"Florence is kind of supernaturally confident," says Aster. "She's really not like Dani at all. Those meeker qualities are nowhere to be found in Florence's personality."

It was "Lady Macbeth" that put Pugh on Aster's radar. They initially Skyped together to discuss the film, but things only came together after the director had gone through hundreds of auditions.

"I just had a very strong feeling about her after seeing 'Lady Macbeth.' In 'Lady Macbeth, she plays this impenetrable, poised, calculating sociopathic woman. But I could see her doing this which is almost the polar opposite," Aster says. "And also there is a trajectory in the film. I was excited to see her realize that arc."

The part was close to Aster; the 32-year-old New York filmmaker based Dani on himself. Just as the terrors of "Hereditary" emerged from family dynamics, the folk-horror of "Midsommar" is predicated on a break-up. Aster wrote it in the aftermath of a college split that, like "Midsommar," mingled emotional pain with psychedelics. Aster conceives of the film as a bad trip.❑

Bloggers make careers out of following the Duchesses' style

By ALICIA RANCILIO
MIKE HOUSEHOLDER
Associated Press

OKEMOS, Mich. (AP) — From Meghan the Duchess of Sussex's recent maternity clothing to Kate the Duchess of Cambridge's love of L.K. Bennett wedges, the women continue to be trendsetters when it comes to their fashion choices. So much so that bloggers have made careers out of tracking who and what they wear.

Susan E. Kelley founded the website What Kate Wore in 2011, when Britain's Prince William got engaged to marry Kate Middleton.

"I had another blog, and anytime I wrote about Kate, there was this huge boost in readership. And so I talked about it with my husband. I said, 'You know, do you think people would really be interested in reading about what Kate Middleton wears?'"

The site really took off when the royal couple took a tour of Canada and the United States a few months after their wedding.

"She's changing outfits multiple times a day, and people loved it. There was this enormous interest in it, and it exploded on Twitter and on Facebook and it kind of rolled on from there," Kelley said during an interview at her home in Okemos, Michigan, near Lansing.

This combination photo shows Britain's Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, at multiple events across London.

Associated Press

Christine Ross of Lovettsville, Virginia, is co-editor of a website that follows the Duchess of Sussex's style, called Meghan's Mirror . The site actually launched before Meghan started dating Prince Harry, because Ross' co-editor, Amanda Dishaw of Toronto, was a fan of Markle's TV series "Suits."

Once Harry and Meghan were spotted together in public, the actress' profile went up. And so did visits to their site.

"When Meghan was seen at the Invictus Games with Prince Harry in Toronto, it just exploded, and all of a sudden it was like, 'OK, this is serious. This is real. This is happening,'" said Ross. "People were so interested in what she wore and the charities that she worked with and the messages that she was sending, and the site just really took off from there."

So, how exactly do these bloggers figure out who the duchesses are wearing?

Kelley says for official engagements, the Palace provides a minimal amount of information about the clothing worn.

"Kensington Palace will tell reporters at the scene the primary designer she's wearing," said Kelley, adding that the Palace doesn't reveal who made Kate's accessories.

But it also comes down to a study in repetition.

"Kate has designers that she goes to again and again," Kelley said.

For Meghan's Mirror, Ross says she and her team have studied fashion and will examine the Duchess of Sussex's wardrobe down to the tiniest of details to get it right.

"Every time there's a new picture of Meghan, whether it's a paparazzi photo or an official event, there's a mad rush to our computers, and we really just start Googling," she said. "It comes down to a really unique knowledge of the brands that she loves. Meghan tends to stick to the same designers over and over again, and we sit down and analyze things like stitching or buttons. ... We've become very good at (it) as we've learned more about her style."

Ross says Meghan's Mirror considers itself an ultimate resource for fashion info on Meghan, including an archive of anything she's worn in public.

"We've worked really hard to curate our archives where you can find exactly what she's worn and all the details about it, and you can also get mirror Meg styles at a fraction of the cost. So every time she steps out, we really work hard to add everything she's wearing, from the earrings to the shoes to the jacket, all on to our archive so our readers can go on there, click and shop those styles."

They also sell Meghan's Mirror-inspired items, including jewelry on Etsy.com.

What Kate Wore also links to clothing Kelley calls "repliKates," shoppable items similar to something the Duchess of Cambridge has worn.

Tracking the duchesses can be time consuming, especially with the time difference from the U.S. and London. "There are a lot of very early mornings for me," Kelley said. "But the real crunch comes when they go on tour, because multiple tours have been in time zones that were 12, 14, 16-hour time differences. I just know I'm not going to see my husband. We'll pass each other in the hallway."

All in all, it's still fun work.❑

Lukas Nelson wants listeners to turn off the news

By SCOTT BAUER
Associated Press

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real, "Turn Off the News (Build A Garden)" (Fantasy Records) Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real have a piece of advice for their listeners: Turn off the news.

But listeners would be wise to get turned on to "Turn Off the News (Build a Garden)," a strong step forward for Nelson and his versatile band.

Nelson, the son of country legend Willie Nelson who sounds more than a bit like his famous dad, takes his band on a journey through multiple genres of music on the new album, including country, rock, soul, folk and R&B. Along the way he gets help from a host of A-list stars including his old man, Neil Young, Sheryl Crow and Kesha. The title track is a standout in a record full of strong songs, with the 30-year-old Nelson taking on the role of sage, looking for a way to bring people together in this era of division. "Turn off the news and raise your kids/Give them something to believe in," he sings. "Teach them how to be good people/Give them hope that they can see." On the duet "Civilized Hell," it's almost hard to tell when Lukas stops and his dad picks it up. But, as they sing about being rebels and liking it, they make clear they have more in common than just their voices. "I ain't leavin' this road I know/I ain't done fightin' for the freedom I chose," the 86-year-old Nelson sings. "Can't put a rope on me/You can't shoot me down."

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real have been on a roll lately: The strong "Turn Off the News" comes on the heels of their standout work on the "A Star Is Born" soundtrack (they also appear in the film) and the boys will open for the Rolling Stones on their summer tour.❑

In a May 25, 2019 file photo, Lukas Nelson performs at the BottleRock Napa Valley Music Festival at Napa Valley Expo, in Napa, Calif.

Associated Press

Italy's 'cannabis light' creates buzz even if the pot won't

By ALESSIA MELCHIORRE
COLLEEN BARRY
Associated Press

ROME (AP) — It's been called the Italian "green gold rush." Mild, barely there marijuana dubbed "cannabis light" has put Italy on the international weed map, producing hundreds of stores that sell pot by the pouch and attention from investors banking the legalization of stronger stuff will follow.

The flourishing retail industry around cannabis light - weed so non-buzzy, it's essentially the decaf coffee of marijuana - surfaced as an unintended by-product of a law meant to restore Italy as a top producer of industrial hemp. Now, storefronts that peddle chemically ineffective hemp flowers in varieties such as "Chill Haus" and "Black Buddha" are getting blowback that some Italians fear will nip business in the bud.

Italy's highest court clouded the climate four weeks ago by ruling it was illegal to market hemp-derived products that weren't "in practice devoid" of the power to provide a perceptible high. Sporadic testing and customer reviews suggested cannabis light outlets sold weed that weak. The law-and-order interior minister nonetheless declared war on the shops with neon leaf logos last month, vowing to close them "street by street, shop by shop" nationwide.

"It is neither possible nor acceptable that in Italy there are 1,000 shops where there are drugs legally, in broad daylight. This is disgusting," said Matteo Salvini, who made keeping migrants out of Italy a primary focus after taking office a year ago. Some business owners are ready to fight back. The owner of Green Planet in the southern city of Caserta chained himself to the fence around his locked shop this month after a raid in which police seized 16 grams of cannabis light. Gioel Magini, the owner of a Cannabis Amsterdam Store franchise in Sanremo, proposed a class-action lawsuit to keep the shops open and their owners from losing money. "I closed a pizzeria to open this store. Now, they want us to go bankrupt," Magini told Italian news agency ANSA. "It's as if to fight alcoholism, the sale of non-alcoholic beer is banned."

In this Thursday, June 6, 2019 photo shows a cannabis light store in Rome.
Associated Press

The commotion reflects the lag in Europe's pro-marijuana movement compared to the recreational use frontiers of North America. The coffee shops in Amsterdam where tourists have gone since the late 1970s to purchase pot in public never took off outside the Netherlands. While more than 30 European countries have laws allowing medical marijuana in some form, patient advocates complain of high prices and inadequate supplies.

Enter "la cannabis light," the catchy name Italians have for cannabis sativa plant derivatives with low levels of THC, the psychoactive compound in marijuana that causes a high. Hemp and marijuana are the same plant, but scientists classify dry plants with no more than 0.3% THC as hemp. In the 28-country European Union, of which Italy is a member, the cutoff is 0.2%. A December 2016 Italian law, however, set a domestic ceiling three times higher than that to give hemp farmers leeway for natural variations resulting from cultivation, according to Stefano Masini, a spokesman for Italy's Coldiretti agriculture lobby.

Although 0.6% is just over the THC concentration required for hemp to become marijuana in a botanist's book, Italian regulators assumed it was too low to have a mind-altering effect and its related consumer appeal. Entrepreneurs in a country with a lackluster economy nonetheless saw an opportunity.

In this Thursday, June 6, 2019 photo, biscuits and other products are displayed at a Cannabis light store, in Rome.
Associated Press

The hemp law that took effect 2 ½ years ago permitted sales of cosmetics and products made with hemp. Gift boutiques, corner markets and stand-alone grow shops soon stocked cannabis-infused pasta, olive oil and gelato, but also jars and bags of "light" buds. Since marijuana still was illegal, producers labeled the products as "collector's items" not intended for consumption.

Rolling papers and glass pipes storekeepers might display nearby advertised otherwise.

"To say it is for collectors doesn't mean a thing," Coldiretti's Masini said. "If you can sell something that can be eaten or inhaled, obviously the use is something different."

Even so, cannabis light is a far cry from the legal weed with THC levels of 5% to 35% that adults can buy for recreational use at licensed dispensaries in some parts of the U.S. A Seattle blogger accustomed to the high-octane marijuana in Washington state called Italy's cannabis light "faux weed" after smoking some in Rome and feeling nothing. Other reviewers have described a slight relaxing effect. THC content - or more precisely, how much it takes to get stoned - was considered by Italy's Supreme Court of Cassation in the May 30 decision that alarmed the cannabis light industry. The case involved two light cannabis shops in central Italy that police shut down on suspicion of drug trafficking. An investigating judge threw out charges against the owner. Similar cases had resulted in conflicting verdicts on whether the shops could operate legally.

The Supreme Court's ruling summed up the contradictions of cannabis light. The court said the 2016 hemp law and its upper THC limit did not apply to cannabis leaves, buds or other spin-offs from hemp plants. Selling them remained illegal in Italy "unless such products are in practice devoid of a doping effect."

The next day, police performed a "precautionary seizure" of Green Planet and two other stores in Caserta to test if the cannabis light they were selling was a legal non-high or carried illegal high-giving capacity. Local magistrates let Green Planet reopen after two weeks, which included the several its owner spent outside chained to the gated door in protest. Results must come back from THC tests on his confiscated products before he can sell cannabis light again.Police raids in other cities have cannabis producers and sellers worried. They are waiting to see if the Supreme Court's full opinion, due by July 30, clarifies if they have a green light to keep mining the gold rush until the novelty of cannabis light wears off or more liberal laws clear the way for heavier marijuana on store shelves.

In other parts of Europe, changing attitudes on marijuana planted across the Atlantic might find fertile ground.. The government that took over in Luxembourg in November was the first in Europe to legalize recreational marijuana. Switzerland, which is not an EU member, allows cannabis light with up to 1% THC to be sold like tobacco. In Spain, cannabis social clubs are sprouting up since drug laws prohibiting marijuana possession are rarely enforced against casual users.❑